

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, February 2, 1989

Published Since 1877

Recipient said of tract, "I've read it 100 times"

By Breena Kent Paine

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — "I had never led anyone to the Lord before I came to New Orleans Seminary" is a classic response Charles Kelley Jr. hears every semester from at least one of his students.

As assistant professor of evangelism at New Orleans Seminary, Kelley is responsible for organizing a class every student must take to graduate, "Continued Witness Training." The seminary also requires all its students to participate in gospel visitation and personal evangelism.

"Every evangelism class requires five verbatims, because we believe you can't learn to witness" without actually doing it, said Kelley. These verbatims are dialogues of actual instances in which students share about the love of Christ.

Active, personal evangelism is a necessity "because it's the only way you really learn how to do evangelism. When you're out there toe-to-toe with the lost person, the Holy Spirit becomes your instructor, and that's the kind of classroom we want to set up," Kelley explained.

Most students say they have become more bold in telling others about their faith after taking the classes. For example, one student, Will Bradham, related a recent ex-

perience. He and his Continuing Witness Training team members came across a rough-looking man one day, and tried to share Christ with him, but the man told them he was on his way to work and could not talk.

"You can't learn to witness without actually doing it."

Bradham handed him a Christian tract with his phone number on the back. Several days later, while Bradham was in his church office, his secretary knocked on his door and told him a hungry, dirty man was waiting for him outside. The visitor was the man he had met on the street. The man admitted he had lied; he did not really have a job. He took the tract, crumpled and dirty, out of his pocket and said he had read it over 100 times. Bradham explained the plan of Christian salvation to him, and the man prayed to receive Christ into his life that day.

"Anyone who doesn't ever plant any seed won't ever see a harvest," Kelley said.

"We're trying to address our convention's problem of (a decline in) evangelism. We're trying to get pastors, music leaders, and missionaries to (feel at ease) sharing the gospel. . . . We hope in the long run it will help revitalize our convention's commitment to evangelism."

"Evangelism is every Christian's responsibility; therefore it is every minister's responsibility."

In a typical semester, Continuing Witness Training teams from the seminary work with 25 churches, knock on 3,500 doors, talk to 1,500 people and lead 100 people to faith in Christ, said Kelley, noting, "We're planting seeds I think will result one day in a revival in New Orleans."

Teams from the seminary work closely with local churches in their visitation. As a result, new Christians are linked with churches to help nurture their faith in Christ, and churches have an extended outreach ministry.

Some students plan to be ministers who could not give the plan of salvation or scripture references before taking his classes, he said. And every semester, at least one student will lead a person to Christ for the first time in his life.

Breena Kent Paine writes for New Orleans Seminary.

Pray that they may believe

Southern Baptists across America have been asked to set aside the week of March 5-11 as a week of earnest prayer for home missions. Woman's Missionary Union leaders have suggested that children and adults alike take time each day, both at church and at home, to intercede on behalf of Southern Baptists' 3,841 home missionaries and the 167 million Americans who do not know Jesus Christ. The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering is taken during the Week of Prayer for Home Missions, which provides nearly half of the budget of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. This year's goal is \$39 million. (HMB photo by Richard Shock)

Annie Armstrong gifts average 18¢ per lost person, Lewis says

By Mark Wingfield

Southern Baptists last year gave their home missionaries little more than a penny for their thoughts on winning America's lost to Christ, Larry Lewis said.

Lewis, president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, referred to the \$30.5 million given to the 1988 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions.

"That sounds like a lot of money," he said. "But when you consider that there are 167 million people in America who do not know Jesus Christ, you realize the needs far outweigh the resources."

"Last year's gifts amounted to only 18 cents per lost person in America," Lewis said.

"We must move beyond thinking and talking about missions to giving and going in missions," he said. "We have not 18 reasons but 167 million reasons to support home missions, for that's how many people in our country need to hear our witness."

Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, agreed with Lewis' assessment. WMU and the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission promote the Annie Armstrong Offering

on behalf of the Home Mission Board.

"With only 18 cents, you cannot make a phone call to a lost person. You cannot buy a gallon of gasoline, a bus ticket or subway fare to make a personal visit," she explained. "You cannot even pay the postage to send a letter."

Weatherford added that 18 cents per lost person also won't buy television or radio time to reach the masses of lonely people in America's cities.

Despite this handicap, the 3,760 missionaries supported by the Home Mission Board are reaching a significant portion of America's lost, Lewis said. Missionaries, chaplains and volunteers minister in all 50 states and the U.S. territories, constituting America's largest missionary force.

Many of these missionaries say it hurts them to know Southern Baptists won't sacrifice more for missions. However, they add that they would keep doing their work regardless of how much money might be available.

"I would do this work without any money because God has called me," said Ray Allen, director of evangelism and stewardship for the Baptist Convention of New England. Because the Baptist work in New England is

relatively new, the state convention receives significant financial support through the Home Mission Board.

However, Allen worries about the small sacrifices Southern Baptists make in missions giving, he said. "It makes me feel bad that Southern Baptists seem to be losing their direction as a missionary people."

"We have gotten very comfortable in our health and wealth," Allen said. "We're making a lot of the sacrifices we used to make for missions. Today we spend our money on lake houses and extra cars instead of missions."

"We live in a world of comfort," added mission pastor Rob Pengra. Pengra and his wife, Lori, started Scappoose Baptist Fellowship in Scappoose, Ore., one year ago.

"The amount of money we give for lost people is so minimal compared to what we put up for comfort," he said. "We need to turn toward praying for the lost and not just toward getting things for ourselves. I think we put our time and money into what we pray for."

Missionary Carolyn McClendon believes if Southern Baptists really saw the needs in America they would give more and go more. McClendon

directs the Baptist Friendship House near the French Quarter in New Orleans.

"We need to see real, live hurting people," she explained. "But that's frightening because it means we can't live a safe, secure lifestyle anymore."

"How serious are we about meeting the needs of hurting people if we spend more on a Dr. Pepper than on winning a lost person to the Lord?" McClendon asked.

The 1989 goal for the Annie Armstrong Offering is \$39 million. "If we reach that goal, we will have given only 23 cents per lost person," Weatherford explained. "That still won't get the message of Jesus Christ to them all, but it will go further than ever before."

Lewis said he believes Southern Baptists have the best system available to reach America with the gospel, if they will support it. "There is no entity — denominational, televised or parachurch — with greater power to address lost people than Southern Baptists have," he said.

"The firewood is in place. We only need the spark."

"Soviets can visit churches"

ABILENE, Texas (BP) — Although religion has been ignored in the Soviet Union for most of this century, people there now are free to visit churches, a Soviet citizen told students at Hardin-Simmons University here.

Churches always have been open, but they were ignored after the Bolshevik revolution separated church and state in 1917, Tatiana Nikitin said during a visit with her husband, Sergei, to the Baptist school.

Soviets could choose their religion, but no one cared to help them, Mrs. Nikitin said.

"Now the situation is more lucky," she added, "because our government understands that only in connection with our church and our believers can we overcome every difficulty in our lives, especially in our spiritual lives."

"We are not believers. We are not atheists, too," her husband said. "We believe that after death, the soul of some person will live in memory of rest of people, in their souls. So if you live not only for yourself, but for other people, you will live after your death. Maybe, we'll see about it."

Addressing a student's question about religious freedom in the Soviet Union, Nikitin said: "If you read our constitution, you will find all groups' rights. The problem is to combine this constitution's words and reality."

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

No easy money

Gambling interests are, evidently, making their big push for this legislative term, which ends in 1991. At least four gambling bills were passed by committees last week with no public hearing allowed, and these four likely will be the flagships for immediate gambling legislation.

These bills were considered by committees shortly before legislative deadlines, with such timing very likely for the purpose of not having time for public hearings. Lawmakers point to the impoverished condition of the state as the reason for needing legalized gambling, but such reasoning is about as far-fetched as reasoning can be.

Gambling is most attractive to those who are the hardest pressed to furnish life's necessities. The money that is spent in gambling is thrown away, because in gambling everybody loses. And that is money that could have made a meager income go just a bit farther.

According to the provisions of a bill that would allow pari-mutuel gambling on greyhound racing if passed in a local option election (SB 2570), 18 percent of the proceeds would go to the county, the state, and the track owners. The city where the track was to be located would get nothing, and the gamblers would lose 18 percent right off the top. Of course, some gamblers would win something; but with 18 percent being skimmed off of the top, there would be many more losers than winners. The net results would be loss, and that is the way it

is with all legalized gambling.

The only way to come out even on gambling is to do it illegally so that the governmental entities and establishment owners don't get in on the action. And gambling is wrong on the face of it, so it doesn't seem that it would make much difference whether it was done legally or illegally. For those who want to gamble, their best bet is find a crap game in a back room somewhere so that at least all of the money would go to the winner.

That is not to say that the Baptist Record endorses gambling. It is to say that gambling is wrong however it is carried out, and the state and counties don't need to be in the business of promoting it.

Why all of the sudden interest in a two percent income and a five percent income from gambling for the county and the state? That will not amount to a great deal of money, for there is not a lot of money to be bet in Mississippi. According to news reports, a former president pro tempore of the Senate found his interest in a pay-off from equipment manufacturers in a motel parking lot. Surely history in that sense is not repeating itself, but the proposed gambling income for the county and the state is small indeed for the headaches and problems that have proven themselves to be relentlessly attached to gambling. In those cases, history does repeat itself without fail.

And it needs to be pointed out that while gamblers will automatically

lose 18 percent, the counties, the state, and the owners will get their money without fail. The state would get the most — five percent from three tracks. The counties would get only two percent from their own track. But all legislators will vote.

Gambling will be allowed in only five counties. They are Warren, Hancock, Marshall, DeSoto, and Jackson. If it is successful in providing extra income, what about the envy of other counties? What about the wrath as other counties see needed money going out of their areas into others. And only three of the five will be chosen. How are the other two which are snubbed going to react?

And what about the cities such as the financially strapped Jackson? How are those city fathers going to feel about money going from the city to three counties on the edge of the state?

Yes, gambling is morally wrong, but the reason for its being morally wrong is that it is no good. They are those most needy and tempted to get something for nothing who succumb to it most; and then they lose it all, sometimes even their homes, families, and jobs.

The problems that go with gambling are greater than any benefits could be.

There is no easy money. Everything demands its price. Gambling is no exception.

One of the bills, HCR 95, a concurrent resolution that would provide for

(Continued on page 4)

Guest opinion . . .

Gambling bills — a risk with the future

By Paul Griffin Jones II

Gambling has become a major focus of the 1989 legislature. Committees in the House and the Senate have passed out legislation which would legalize almost all forms of gambling. A vote on each bill must be taken by Feb. 9, but most Capitol observers believe both chambers will call the measures up prior to that date. The bills and resolutions of concern are:

HCR 95 — This concurrent resolution would set forth a constitutional amendment which would remove the present constitutional prohibition against a state lottery. As reported out of the House Constitution Committee, the legislature would be given authority to establish lotteries as it so desires.

SB 2014 — This bill could best be called an omnibus gambling bill. The purpose is to establish a state gaming commission — a new and expensive agency of state government — which would serve as a part of the State Tax Commission. It would establish a broad framework which would grant to the gaming commission necessary authority and staff to authorize and "control" any type of gambling which

might at any future time be established. This bill is so crafted to allow the licensing of casino gambling on a cruise ship on the gulf coast, to regulate pari-mutuel gambling on horses, dogs, jai alai or other activity, and to be the vehicle of authorization of all other types of gambling.

This bill would also attempt to clean up the problems generated by the legislature's legalization of bingo in 1987. This is the expressed rationale for the bill; however, a state gaming commission would not be needed if that were the only form of gambling to be regulated. It places no limitation on the number of hours per day or days per week which bingo could operate and contains few solutions to the present legal problems with bingo.

SB 2570 would force the citizens of Warren, Hancock, Marshall, DeSoto, and Jackson counties to vote to determine if they would desire to establish pari-mutuel greyhound racing tracks. A private "educational and informational" meeting between members of the Senate Finance Committee and representatives of the greyhound rac-

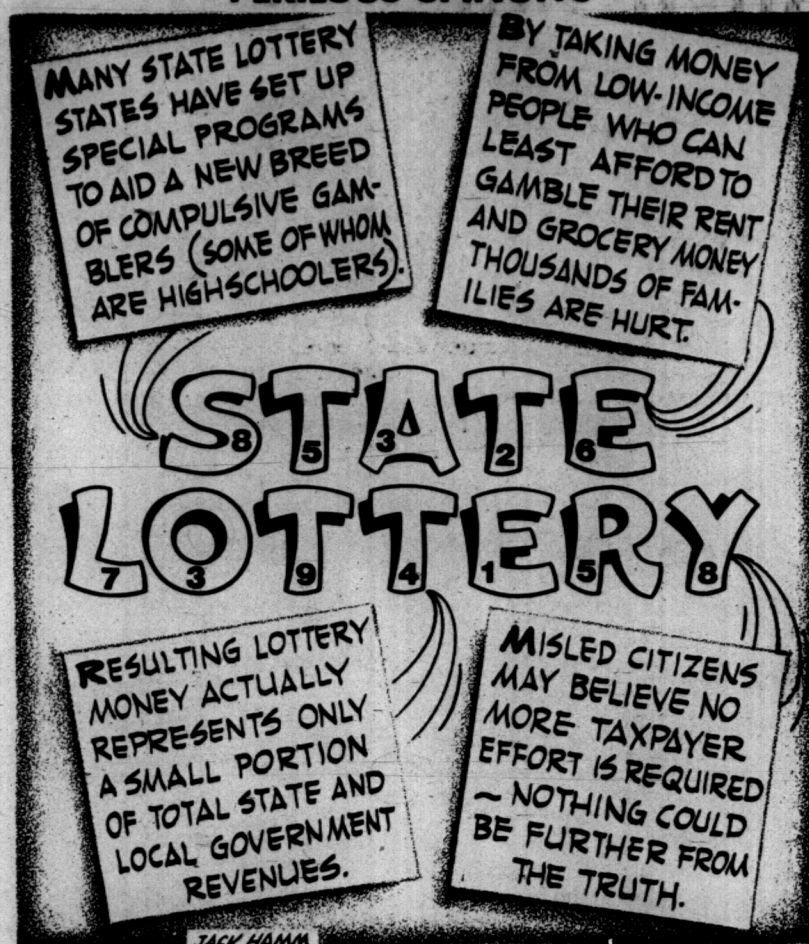
ing associations was held Jan. 26. Opponents of this were neither informed nor allowed equal private meeting or any public hearing.

This bill is another example of how the public is kept "in the dark" until quick action is taken without public hearings. Gambling cannot stand the light of examination and thus must secure its support in the dark back rooms of legislative compromise.

SB 2617 would provide the mechanism of a state lottery and would become effective if the constitution were amended to remove the present statewide prohibition. In the meeting of the Senate Finance Committee, one member pointed out that this bill was "patently unconstitutional" under the present law, but that did not deter a majority of the committee from approving this bill.

SB 2627 would allow any gambling ship operating in the Mississippi Sound to secure an alcohol beverage permit from the State Tax Commission. This is another example of contorted legislation since presently there is no legal authority for such

PERILOUS SPINOFFS



The Evangelism Conference

Evangelism conferences are very popular all over the nation. They are occasions for preachers to gather in order to hear someone else preach. For years they have been just about the most popular gathering among Southern Baptists.

The Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference for this year will be at First Church, Meridian. The theme is "Making Jesus your Lord," and the date is Feb. 6 to 8.

As is customary, several of the speakers are coming from out of state. Perhaps the one best known to Mississippians is Junior Hill, because he has held a number of revivals in the state. He is from Hartselle, Ala. Other out-of-state speakers include Charles Page, pastor of First Church, Nashville, Tenn.; David Miller, direc-

ships to operate in the territorial limits of our state.

These bills and concurrent resolutions have passed out of committee without any public hearing. No attempt has been made to allow the public to address these matters of concern. Senators and representatives must be informed so they can vote as representatives of the people. They must receive word from their constituents immediately. All senators and representatives can be reached at 359-3770. Unless the citizens cry out and reject these attempts to legalize all forms of gambling, Mississippi could soon be another state which has bought the something for nothing arguments of the gambling industry. When Mississippi legalizes gambling, it makes losers of all its citizens.

Paul Jones is executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission.

tor of missions in Heber Springs, Ark.; Clark Hutchinson, pastor of Eastside Church, Marietta, Ga.; and Altus Newell, pastor of Dawson Memorial Church, Birmingham, Ala. Newell, of course, is not really an out of stater, for he is a native of Mississippi.

Then some of Mississippi's finest will also be program personalities. Among the speakers will be Bill Causey, pastor of Parkway Church, Jackson, and James Richardson, pastor of First Church, Madison. There will be testimonies by Grady Crowell, director of missions in Clarke Association, and Bobby Douglas, pastor of First Church, Columbus.

A number of Mississippi musicians will have prominent places on the program. There will be special music by the choir of Highland Church, Meridian; Doug Haney of First Church, Meridian; One Voice, a team of musicians of Mississippi; Karen Hardy of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton; the Lamar Association Men's Quartet; The Mississippi Singing Churchmen; Graham Smith, church music director for Mississippi; Susan Clark, Oakdale Church, Brandon; Brad Cundiff, student at the University of Southern Mississippi; Sherri Stockstill, concert artist of Starkville; and Hubert Greer, music evangelist of Brookhaven. Clyde Carraway and Louis Nicolosi will lead the congregational singing during two of the sessions; and Senita Webb of Midway Church, Meridian, and Dot Pray of Church Music Department will be the pianist and organist respectively.

The evangelism conferences never fail to be worthwhile meetings because the people who are involved make them so.

The Baptist Record

VOLUME 112

(ISSN-0005-5778)

NUMBER 50

Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Subscription \$7.35 a year payable in advance. Second class postage paid at Jackson, Mississippi. The Baptist Record is a member of Southern Baptist Press Association.

Editor	Don McGregor
Associate Editor	Tim Nicholas
Assistant Editor	Anne McWilliams
Advertising Coordinator	Evelyn Keyes
Editorial Assistant	Florence Larrimore
Circulation Assistant	Renee Walley
Financial Records	Betty Anne Bailey
Computer Operator	Irene Martin

Baptist Record Advisory Committee: Ferrell Cork, Jackson, vice chairman; Joel Haire, Crystal Springs; Bruce Hill, Lexington; Raymond Martin Jr., Jackson; Billy Thames, Wesson; Odean Puckett, Natchez, chairman; ex-officio, Evelyn Keyes, secretary, Jackson.

Send news, communications, and address changes to
The Editor, Baptist Record
P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205

Bush nominated as SEBTS dean

By Marv Knox

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP) — L. Russ Bush III has been nominated as vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty at Southeastern Seminary here, announced Southeastern President Lewis A. Drummond.

Bush is associate professor of philosophy of religion at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth. His nomination has been opposed by the Southeastern faculty, who gave him a vote of no confidence in November.

Southeastern has been marked by controversy since October 1987, when the seminary's new conservative trustee majority changed the way the school chooses its teachers, vesting more responsibility with the president and trustees.

President W. Randall Lolley, Dean Morris Ashcraft, and six other administrators subsequently resigned. Lolley and Ashcraft cited the policy changes — which they interpreted as ensuring that only biblical inerrantists could be added to the faculty and as dismantling their apparatus for allowing faculty leadership in selecting new teachers — as the reason for their decisions.

A Southeastern Seminary news release announcing the Bush nomination said: "Russ Bush has been considered and investigated in depth by Dr. Drummond. The president is absolutely confident in recommending him to the board of trustees."

"His reputation as a scholar is excellent, and he is a pleasing, thoughtful, and warm personality," Drummond said. "He has received high recommendations from many sources across the Southern Baptist Convention."

Bush meets the criteria he had set for a dean, Drummond told Baptist Press: "We wanted him to be the traditional things — a Southern Baptist, involved in theological education, with a good track record of an academic."

He meets all those qualifications

highly. He's a man who can work with people. He has a lovely spirit."

If the nomination procedure goes as scheduled, Bush will meet with Southeastern faculty, administrators, students, and trustees before trustees vote on his appointment March 13-14, said trustee Chairman Robert D. Crowley.

"I think there's no question about his being elected," said Crowley, pastor of Montrose Baptist Church in Rockville, Md. "Some will oppose him, but I feel certain that Dr. Bush will be elected." Crowley predicted a 25-5 trustee vote in Bush's favor.

Despite trustee support, Bush's nomination is opposed by the faculty, according to a statement from the Southeastern chapter of the American Association of University Professors.

"This nomination was made in spite of a unanimous vote by the faculty on Nov. 16, 1988, not to support the candidacy of Dr. Bush due to his lack of qualifications," the statement says. "While Professor Bush was not supported for this position, six other candidates submitted by President Drummond were affirmed by the faculty as possible nominees."

The statement notes a disagreement over the search process and claims the longstanding procedure, which involves the faculty, "has been disregarded." Crowley said, however, the process is being conducted by "approved guidelines."

The statement also cites current investigations of Southeastern by two accrediting agencies: the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

"The nomination of Professor Bush by President Drummond conflicts with the clear counsel of the faculty, intensifies the troubled circumstances on campus, disregards the counsel of the Southern Association, and contributes to conditions leading to the seminary's sharply declining enrollment."

(Continued on page 4)

The Second Front Page

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, February 2, 1989

Published Since 1877

Accrediting agency delays decision on Southeastern

By Marv Knox

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP) — The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools has delayed until December its decision on continued accreditation of Southeastern Seminary.

Two accrediting agencies — the Southern Association and the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada — are investigating the seminary here following 16 months of controversy.

Conservative trustees changed the school's faculty-selection process during their October 1987 meeting, vesting more responsibility with the president and trustees.

President W. Randall Lolley and seven other administrators subsequently resigned. Lolley cited the policy change — which he said ensures that only biblical inerrantists can be added to the faculty and disallows faculty leadership in selecting new teachers — as the reason.

Consequently, the Association of Theological Schools sent investigators to Southeastern in March 1988. A Southern Association fact-finding committee followed in September.

The initial Association of Theological Schools report on Southeastern called the seminary "a very troubled campus and divided institution." It added, "The provisions

and principles internal to an academic institution have been severely threatened and in some instances abrogated."

The Southern Association committee's report said Southeastern does not conform to some accreditation standards in matters of faculty selection, academic freedom, and organization and administration. And while it did not cite violations regarding the effectiveness of the institution, it raised "serious questions" concerning that issue.

A committee of trustees has responded in writing to both reports, dealing with the criticisms "point by point, paragraph by paragraph," said trustee Chairman Robert D. Crowley.

The Southern Association announced its intention to defer action on Southeastern until December in a letter to Southeastern President Lewis A. Drummond from James T. Rogers, executive director of the association's commission on colleges.

Rogers cited three reasons for the delay: the seminary's response to the association's fact-finding committee was not received until Dec. 10, the day the association's committee on criteria and reports met to review the situation; the seminary's response had not been reviewed by the entire

board of trustees; and that response "contained a substantially different interpretation of the recent controversy at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary from that indicated by the special (fact-finding) committee."

The Southern Association made two requests, Rogers' letter noted:

— "That the institution develop a plan by July 1, 1989, which addresses the following areas of concern: the current image of the seminary, faculty involvement in the employment of other faculty members, perceptions of academic freedom, and the role of the board of trustees in governance."

"This plan should seek to develop a more cooperative relationship among all parties on the campus and should be developed in the spirit of a self-study based on the principles of shared governance. The plan should address both the spirit and the content of the (association's) criteria" for accreditation.

— "That a (Southern Association) committee be appointed to review the institution's plan, visit the campus in the fall of 1989 to assess the seminary's environment and make recommendations to the institution and to the commission on colleges."

Rogers' letter revealed the Southern

(Continued on page 4)

SS conference: focus on growth planning

Growth planning for the multiple staff church will be the focus of the Pastor/Staff Sunday School Growth



Arn

Conference Feb. 27-28, at Alta Woods Baptist Church, Jackson. The conference includes the annual state Growth Spiral Conference as part of its schedule.

Conference leaders include Win Arn, president of the American Church Growth Institute, Pasadena, Calif. Arn, an expert in church growth research, will lead three sessions during the conference. Conference topics Arn will address are "Overcoming Growth Barriers," "How You Reach makes a Difference," and "Determining Growth Potential."

Other featured leaders are Harry Piland, director of the Sunday School Division, Baptist Sunday School Board; Floyd Craig, president of Craig and Associates, Nashville; and Andy Anderson, growth specialist for the Sunday School Board. Craig,

public relations adviser to a former governor of North Carolina, heads a consulting firm in marketing and communications. Craig will lead two sessions. In addition he will host a special breakfast on, Feb. 21 for pastors and staff on strengthening outreach communication.

Sessions begin with an Early Bird Special at 1:30 p.m. Feb. 27. This session will feature Piland, Craig, and Arn.

A banquet with Arn as featured speaker will be at 5:30 p.m. at the church. A registration fee of \$10 per person includes conference materials and a place at the banquet.

No fee will be charged for the evening session which begins at 7 p.m. The evening session provides a number of selective conferences for pastors, staff, and for lay leadership.

(Continued on page 4)



First Church, Louise, burns

John Sandlin, trustee of First Baptist Church, Louise, examines the ruins of the church which burned Jan. 17. The fire marshal and insurance adjuster said the fire started in an apparently faulty heater in the nursery, according to Sandlin. "We've lost a building, but we haven't lost a church," said Sandlin. The estimated cost of rebuilding will be \$200,000. The

church has \$110,000 insurance on the building and \$20,000 on the contents. The congregation which numbers about 40 now, is meeting in the Louise old town hall. They already have a building fund going. Maynard Hall is interim pastor. (Tim Nicholas photo.)

Pace setters in baptisms

In Total Number Baptized 1988			Number of baptisms
	Pastor		
1st Colonial Heights, Jackson (Hinds-Mad.)	Gerald Harris		209
2nd Pass Road, Gulfport (Gulf Coast)	Edgar Jackson		125
3rd First, Jackson (Hinds-Mad.)	Frank Pollard		124
4th Crossgates, Brandon (Rankin)	Tommy Vinson		100
5th Fairview, Columbus (Lowndes)	Mickey Dalrymple		89
6th First, Madison (Hinds-Mad.)	James Richardson		79
Northcrest, Meridian (Lauderdale)	Malcolm Lewis		79
7th Highland, Laurel (Jones)	Dennis Sewell		78
8th Morrison Heights, Clinton (Hinds-Mad.)	Ken Alford		77
9th Canaan, Columbus (Lowndes)	Ben Yarber		65
Goodrum Memorial, Vicksburg (Warren)	Dwight Turner		65
10th Ingalls Avenue, Pascagoula (Jackson)	Don Boone		64
West Jackson Street, Tupelo (Lee)	Bert Harper		64

Top churches by baptism ratio 1988

	Pastor	Total members	Total baptisms
1st Greater True Vine, Jackson (Hinds-Madison)	Amzie Cotton	126	46
2nd Lifeline Mission, Florence (Rankin)	Ken Brown	77	21
3rd Faith Obedience, Biloxi (Gulf Coast)	Frank Brashears	34	8
4th Magnolia, Vancleave (Jackson)	Sammy Stockman	157	39
5th Palestine, Plantersville (Lee)	Frank Cayson	106	24
6th Campbells Creek, Mendenhall (Simpson)	James Layton	38	9
7th Brodie Road, Biloxi (Gulf Coast)	Jerry Masterson	249	42
8th Lilly Orchard, Pascagoula (Jackson)	Larry Darden	85	16
9th Meehan, Meridian (Lauderdale)	J. L. Raspberry	55	10
10th Grace Memorial, Tupelo (Lee)	Joe Holcomb	156	30
11th Burnside, Philadelphia (Neshoba)	Ronny Spivey	60	11
12th Mt. Gilead, Blue Springs (Union County)	Johnny McCullough	104	18

Total baptisms reported in Mississippi for 1988 were 14,996; a slight increase over the 14,563 in 1987.

7.6 baptisms per church or 1 baptism for every 44 members.

Ratio of baptisms per resident members is one baptism per 31 members.

SS conference: focus on growth planning



Piland Craig
(Continued from page 3)

from First Church, Hendersonville, Tenn.; Secretaries and Growth, a conference for church and Sunday School secretaries, led by Don Hicks, minister of education, Alta Woods; Music and Sunday School Growth, for music staff leaders, led by L. Graham Smith, MBCB; Deacons and Sunday School Growth led by Randy Tompkins, MBCB; and Outreach Leaders led by Keith Williams, MBCB. The night session is targeted to church staff and other key leaders such as deacons, secretaries, music, and Sunday School division and department leaders.

The State Growth Spiral conference will follow the early breakfast meeting with Craig on Feb. 28. The

conference is targeted to all size churches and includes conferences for pastors, staff, Sunday School directors and other general officers, as well as age group leaders.

Andy Anderson will lead the general sessions and the Advance Growth Spiral Conference. Ken Marler, growth consultant, BSSB, will lead the Basic Growth Spiral Conference for pastors and other general officers. Age group conference leaders include Ron Pratt, adults; Becky Martin, youth; Beth Taylor, children; and Linda Myers, preschool. There will be no fee for attending the Growth Spiral Conference. Growth Spiral notebooks will be available for purchase for \$10 and a box lunch will be served for \$4.

The MBCB Sunday School Department, Keith Wilkinson, director, is sponsor of these events.

"The Cooperative Program is the glue which holds Southern Baptists together and enables them to stick to the Great Commission." — Thomas E. Halsell



Anderson

Bush nominated as dean

(Continued from page 3)
ment," the statement concludes.

C. Michael Hawn, professor of church music and president of the AAUP chapter, explained why the faculty's statement claimed Bush is unqualified for the post: "The most glaring example is there is no evidence on his resume of any administrative experience whatsoever. This is not the kind of position to cut your teeth on administratively — a very demanding position.

"The dean of the faculty has to have the faculty's confidence to function. He is to be the faculty's advocate in counsel to the administration."

For his part, Bush said, he hopes he can gain the faculty's confidence when he meets with the professors. "I am anxious to talk to them and see if this is the Lord's will," he said. "I have not actually gone to the seminary yet. What I have agreed to do is take the next step in the process. I look forward

to talking to them — faculty, students, trustees."

Bush told Baptist Press he empathizes with the faculty: "I realize Southeastern's been under a lot of stress. The faculty has gone through an emotional time. There needs to be reconciliation.

Bush added he does not take the faculty's opposition personally.

Crowley said the faculty's position on Bush will not sway the trustees' vote: "It didn't interfere with the trustees with Dr. Drummond, and it won't interfere with Dr. Bush. We would have expected that. It's no big news. They don't want somebody with conservative theology."

Bush has not been the seminary's lone candidate, Crowley said. The list of possible nominees "started off between 25 and 30" names, Drummond added.

The 10 names presented to the faculty in November included three who

were opposed, one who withdrew and six who were approved, Hawn said.

The three opposed were Bush; Richard Melick of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tenn.; and Wayne Grudom of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Ill. Robert Dale, formerly of Southeastern and now church-minister relations director for Virginia Baptists, withdrew. The six approved were Bruce Powers and Delos Miles of the Southeastern faculty; Daniel Aleshire and Gerald Borchert of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.; William Schweer of Golden Gate Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif.; and Gordon Harris of North American Baptist Seminary in Sioux Falls, S.D.

"We left the president plenty of latitude, a variety of theological positions," Hawn said. "All of them (the six approved) are conservative, and there's a lot of administrative experience represented, and they are very published people."

Bush, 44, has taught at Southwestern Seminary, where he earned master's and doctor's degrees, since 1973. He also earned a bachelor's degree from Mississippi College in Clinton, and he has studied at North Texas State University and the University of Cambridge, England.

He is one of the general editors of the new commentary to be published by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Broadman Press. He has been interim pastor of churches in Texas.

His father is Russell Bush, pastor of Main Street Church, Hattiesburg. He is married to the former Cynthia McGraw, and they have two children, Joshua and Bethany.

No easy money

(Continued from page 2)

a statewide vote on a constitutional amendment that would make lottery legal, would set the vote for June 20. The timing would seem to have been established in order to humiliate Baptists in the state who will have held their national convention in Las Vegas the previous week. The word in the Legislature is that if Baptists can go to Las Vegas for their convention, Mississippi can vote on a lottery.

There are two flaws in that thinking. One is that Baptists have not avoided sin spots in selecting their conventions and this year are planning evangelistic efforts in Nevada and specifically in Las Vegas ahead of the convention. The other is that if Baptists are to avoid a city because of its sin image, then we will need to establish a sin index in order to determine where conventions can be held. How would New Orleans stack up? Or Los Angeles? Or Dallas or Houston? What about Atlanta? Where would lines be drawn? How much sin would be allowed before the convention would avoid that city? And how would we justify the loss of witnessing opportunities in order not to tarnish our image?

In addition to SB 2570 and HCR 95, there is SB 2014. This is an omnibus gambling bill that would establish a state gaming commission. It would

regulate bingo operations in the state and be a part of the state tax commission. The gaming commission would be in charge.

Then there is SB 2617. This would establish the mechanism for a state lottery. This bill is on the calendar of the Senate and has the possibility of reaching a vote when lottery is unconstitutional in the state. It would appear to be the height of arrogance to vote on a measure that would be the mechanism for an unconstitutional operation.

Another bill dealing with illegalities is SB 2627 that would allow alcohol to be sold to and on gambling ships in Mississippi Sound. Such gambling ships are illegal.

These bills were passed with committees short-handed because of conflicting meetings. Whether or not this was by design could never be determined.

All of these bills need to be stopped in their tracks; and except for the one House bill (HCR 95), these tracks are in the Senate. Senators and House members need to hear immediately that we don't want this kind of legislation to move any farther. It will take letters, and it will take phone calls, but it needs to be done.

The Senate will listen. It always has.

The responsibility is ours. The legislators need to hear from us. And time is short.

Accrediting agency delays decision on Southeastern

(Continued from page 3)

Association "recognized there was another side" of the issue, said Crowley, pastor of Montrose Baptist Church in Rockville, Md. The Southern Association fact-finding committee's report was offset by the trustees' report, resulting in the more balanced tone of Rogers' letter, he said.

"I believe the matter is essentially at rest," Crowley added. "We will certainly comply with the request of the Southern Association to give any information they desire and submit a report before July 1."

Said Rogers, "The bottom line is

that we had identified what we see as problems and weaknesses and have given the institution time to address those in a collegial manner and a typical spirit of shared governance. That means people sitting down and talking and resolving problems."

Asked to predict if Southeastern might lose its accreditation, Rogers said: "I would like to think the best, to approach this in a positive way.

"From assurances we have received from the president and board members, I think the problems will be resolved."

Marv Knox is BP feature editor.

"Feb. 6 is cut-off date to nominate," says Dobbs

The cut-off date for recommendations for executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board has been established as Feb. 6; according to Eugene Dobbs, chairman of the search committee.

That means that all recommendations are to be in by Feb. 6, and hence should probably be mailed no later than Feb. 3.

Dobbs, pastor of First Church, Philadelphia, is chairman of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Executive Committee, which, by board policy, is the search committee.

Earl Kelly, executive director-treasurer for the past 14 years, has announced his retirement as of Aug. 15.

Dobbs said that a written recommendation may be given to any members of the search committee, and it will be considered. His address is Box 299, Philadelphia, Miss. 39350.

Dobbs also asked that pastors return survey forms the search committee has mailed out. These forms from the committee were sent to every pastor in the state and requested information concerning their thoughts on the position of executive director-treasurer.

Thursday, February 2, 1989

Letters to the editor



Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances, and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record. Only signed letters will be used, but the writer may request that his name be withheld. The withholding of names will be at the discretion of the editor.

Religious liberty emphasis

Editor:

The future of the Southern Baptist emphasis on religious liberty and separation of church and state may well be determined by decisions of the SBC Executive Committee in February.

The committee faces a recommendation from a small subcommittee to start an expensive, exclusively Southern Baptist "Religious Liberty Commission." At the same time, proposed budget constraints bring recommended cuts to SBC home and foreign missions programs. It would be the height of folly to begin a new and redundant program at the very time state and national ministries are being compelled to cut back mission support.

That folly is compounded by another little-noticed proposal to be considered by the Executive Committee. The proposed budget would at-

tempt to silence the historic Baptist voice for religious liberty by removing the Baptist Joint Committee from agency standing and burying it in the budget of the Executive Committee. This is especially troubling because it ignores the action of the full Southern Baptist Convention meeting in San Antonio in 1988, which voted clearly to affirm a separate line item in the SBC budget for the BJCPA.

Southern Baptists should be greatly alarmed if the current Executive Committee, a little group of less than 80 persons, proposes to start this redundant venture while slashing support for existing missions programs and presumes to reverse the actions of the convention itself.

The final decision, of course, would be in the hands of the messengers at the SBC; but it is hoped that this recommendation will be headed off at the pass by an informed and responsible Executive Committee.

Grady C. Cothen
Pass Christian

The move to Merrill

Editor:

As we begin this new year, my family and I have much to be thankful for. God has indeed richly blessed us this past year.

We began 1988 by surrendering to God's call to serve on the pioneer mission field as a bi-vocational pastor. At that time I was pastor of Cash Church in Scott County.

We now begin 1989, and I am the pastor of Merrill Baptist Church in Merrill, Oregon. We began our ministry in Merrill this past September. Merrill is a town of 850 located in southern Oregon. The majority of the town is unchurched, as is common for this part of the United States. Having been raised in the Bible Belt, we had no idea that there were places in this country where as many as 80 to 90 percent of the people were lost. The fields are truly white unto harvest, and we look forward to the challenge God has placed before us.

We would like to thank Dr. Dale Holloway, national consultant for bi-vocational ministry of the Home Mission Board; Rev. Holmes Carlisle, director of missions, Scott County; and the Pastor's Conference of Scott

County for their prayers, friendship, and valuable leadership as we were seeking the Lord's will for our lives. Their love and support helped us through some of the most stressful days of our lives.

We will be forever indebted to the many Mississippi Baptists who made it financially possible for us to make the move to Oregon. Without their gifts of love it wouldn't have been possible. Your continued support and prayers have helped to make a very difficult adjustment much easier. Thank you all. We also extend a special word of thanks to the following churches, Cash and Sebastopol in Scott County, Eden and Hebron in Yazoo County, Hickory in Newton County, Shady Grove in Copiah County, and F.B.C. Columbus, Lowndes County.

If we can ever be of any service, feel free to call on us. I would certainly be happy to help promote bi-vocational ministries.

Jim Pender for Loretta,
Suzanne, Jimmy, and Julie

Christianity is growing most rapidly in parts of Asia and countries below the equator.

SANDI PATTI... Live Video Concert

A 55-minute video concert featuring "We Shall Behold Him" and "More Than Wonderful" with Larnelle Harris and many more! For your own copy send check for \$20 to: Mastervision, Inc., P.O. Box 1184M • Franklin, TN 37064



OLD BIBLES REBOUND

A price, binding and style to meet every need. Quality workmanship guaranteed. Write for illustrated price folder.

"Internationally known specialists"
NORRIS BOOKBINDING CO.
Box 305-C — Greenwood, Miss. 38930

Confused About Life Insurance? Why not buy the most life insurance for the least amount of money?

Example: Male, 60, non-smoker

\$100,000

For only **\$32.56** per mo.

Call Don Mahaffey

9:30am to 4:30pm ET Mon.-Fri.

Toll Free 1-800-367-5492

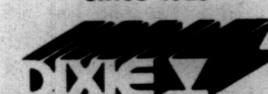
Van Winkle Church Furnishings & Pew Upholstery

Box 501, Fulton, MS. 38843
In MS. Toll Free 1-800-624-9627

We remodel & paint

Interior Signage

Since 1928



Dixie Rubber Stamp & Seal Co.
514 E. Amite St./P.O. Box 202
Jackson, Mississippi 39205
(601) 948-1851/Toll Free 1-800-634-4564

Ask about the energy savings of gas appliances, for now and for years to come.



Mississippi Valley Gas Company

Gas gives you more for your money

AUTHORS WANTED BY NEW YORK PUBLISHER

Leading subsidy book publisher seeks manuscripts of all types: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, scholarly and juvenile works, etc. New authors welcomed. Send for free, illustrated 40-page brochure H-101 Vantage Press, 516 W. 34 St., New York, N.Y. 10001

FOR CHARTER

OR RENT

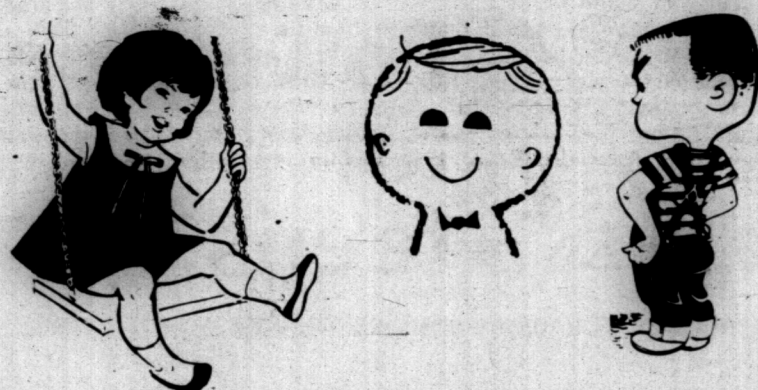


25 - or 47 -

Passenger buses

BUS SUPPLY CO. INC.

McComb, MS 601-684-2900



Weekday education clinic set at Broadmoor March 4

A church weekday education clinic will be held at Broadmoor Church, Jackson, March 4, with the theme, "Let the children become..."

Betty Barber of Clinton, special department worker, is coordinating this event for the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. "Registration is absolutely necessary," she says, "and the cut-off date of Feb. 17 must be observed."

Besides Mrs. Barber, program personnel includes Bob Couch, weekday education consultant, BSSB, Nashville; Betty Sue Bates, director, day care center, Parkway, Jackson; Cindy Lumpkin, children and preschool director, First Church, Hattiesburg; Kathryn Waites, preschool division director, Temple Church, Hattiesburg; Lynell Rogers, assoc. professor, Department of Home Economics, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg; child development teacher; Beverly Willis, three-year teacher, First Methodist Child Development Center, Shreveport; Selma Johnson, preschool director, Broadmoor Church, Shreveport; Barbara Brown, director, Childhood Education, Colonial Heights, Jackson; Fran Robinson, registered

nurse, Family Health Clinic, Jackson; Toby Denson, preschool director, First Church, Madison; Lida Stark, teacher, kindergarten and first grade music, Clinton Park School, Clinton; Dot Moore, teacher's assistant, Clinton Park School, Clinton; Paula Stringer, director of children's activities, Broadmoor Church, Jackson; Kaye Keeton, child development instructor, Jones County Junior College; Leahne Lightsey, instructor, technical child development, Jones County Junior College; Kathy Pace, kindergarten teacher, Clinton Park School; Mary Ann Jacobs, director, Child Development Department, Hinds Junior College; Betty Trotti, former director of Methodist Children's Home day care, Jackson; Julia Bishop, director, early childhood program, Christ United Methodist Church, Jackson.

The agenda will begin with coffee and doughnuts at 8:30 a.m. and general session at 9 a.m., and adjourn at 3:15 p.m. The \$15 registration fee will cover cost of materials and lunch. This fee is refundable if cancellation occurs before Feb. 24.

For more information, contact the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department, phone 968-3800.

Antioch, Columbus, men fix bikes for local kids

In their November meeting, the Baptist Men of Antioch Baptist Church in Columbus decided to take on a project for Christmas. Several children in the community needed bikes for Christmas. The goal set by the men was to recondition four or five bikes to meet this need.

John Kitchens, the Baptist Men's project coordinator, wrote a letter to the local paper about the need for a few used bikes. The television station picked up the story and sent a news crew to interview Kitchens and Al Lewis, Brotherhood president. The response from the community was great.

The week before Christmas saw 26 bikes ready for delivery. Through contact with many individuals, 19 of the

bikes were placed for Christmas. It was decided that the seven remaining bikes would be given to the Baptist Children's Village. These bikes were delivered to Wesley Talkington at Reedy Acres in Water Valley, with the help of Guy Reedy, pastor of First Church, Water Valley.

The story of "catching the spirit of missions" does not end there. The goal at Antioch for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions had been set at \$3,500. The amount received at this time is \$5,439, and it is still climbing.

"It is great to be a part of a church that is willing to give that others might be ministered unto," says the pastor, Jimmy Harrington.

Church building conferences are scheduled for March 13-14

Churches planning new buildings, additions, renovations, or relocation will receive help at the church building conferences scheduled for March 13-14. This is the first time these conferences have been offered in Mississippi for more than 15 years. They are jointly sponsored by Church Building Services, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and the Church Architecture Department, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville.

The meeting on Monday, March 13, will be held at the Lebanon associational office, 500 North 38th Street, Hattiesburg. On March 14, the meeting will be held at the Pontotoc associational office, 254 Highway 15, North, Pontotoc. Each session will begin with registration at 8:30 a.m. and will close at 2:30 p.m. A complimentary lunch will be served, according to James L. Harrell, church building consultant, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Leaders for the conferences, in addition to Harrell, will be John Hack, consultant, Architecture Department of the Sunday School Board; David Michel, director, Stewardship and Cooperative Program Promotion Department; L. Graham Smith, director, Church Music Department and Judd Allen, consultant, Sunday School Department, all of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Bill Walters and Russell Maddox, church building consultants, Baptist General Convention of Texas, Dallas, will lead conferences at the Hattiesburg meeting only.

The complete spectrum of building projects, from survey, planning, and construction, to working with architects and contractors, to fund raising and arranging the complete financial package, will be discussed.

Individual conferences with church committees may be scheduled following adjournment at 2:30 p.m. each day.



Hack

Thursday, February 2, 1989

Japan's new emperor: man or god?

By Erich Bridges

TOKYO, Japan (BP) — Will Japan's new Emperor Akihito be declared a man, a god, or something in between?

Japanese Christians, along with others concerned about the future of religious freedom in Japan, are waiting for an answer to that question.

"We feel a kind of crisis for our freedom of belief," said Takayasu Furukawa, a Japanese Baptist now studying at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Ultra-nationalists and traditionalists in Japan "are trying to have the emperor be a kind of god again," Furukawa said. "They may force us to worship (him) again, which is against our Christianity."

For 26 centuries, Japanese viewed the emperor as a divinity to be venerated like their ancestors. The late Emperor Hirohito, who died Jan. 7 after 62 years on the Chrysanthemum Throne, shocked a defeated Japan after World War II, when he declared he was not divine. Japan's postwar constitution guarantees religious liberty, a right precious to Christians who remember the persecution and humiliation of the old days.

The 55-year-old Akihito, a quiet man like his father, studied with an American Christian tutor as a youth, married a commoner, rides the Tokyo subway, and is said to see himself as a man of the people. He shows little interest in being divine, observers have said.

But the government-sponsored Shinto religious observances that began when the nation realized Hirohito was dying — and will continue up to and after his funeral in February — have outraged many Christians, opposition parties, and factions opposed to the imperial system.

"Most of them feel these ceremonies scheduled for the new emperor would be a violation of the constitution and also a threat to religious freedom," said veteran Southern Baptist missionary Calvin Parker.

Particularly controversial is the "Great Rice-Tasting Ceremony" scheduled for late next year, during which Akihito will present rice to the gods and "commune" with the Sun Goddess. The ceremony supposedly completes the new emperor's ascension to divinity. Without it, officials insist, Akihito will be only a "half emperor."

Numerous Protestants, including Baptists, have participated in protests and demonstrations against the mixture of government and religion. The United Church of Christ in Japan condemned the "sinister program" to use the death of Hirohito and the mourning period afterward to "revive imperial authority and its Shinto ideological buttress."

Japanese Baptists published a pamphlet expressing concern about the dangers of such a movement. They also criticized the expense anticipated for the approaching funeral in light of the constitution's separation of religion and state.

The current conservative government supports the imperial system but finds itself caught in the middle of the religion-state constitutional question, according to observers.

Bridges writes for the FMB.

President Bush prays:

"There is one just use of power, . . . it is to serve the people . . ."

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP) — A few minutes after taking the oath of office as the nation's 41st president, George Bush spoke a prayer as his first presidential act.

Beginning his Jan. 20 inaugural address, Bush prayed: "Heavenly Father, we bow our heads and thank you for your love. Accept our thanks for the peace that yields this day and the shared faith that makes its continuance likely. Make us strong to do your work, willing to heed and hear your will, and write on our hearts these words: 'Use power to help people.' For we are given power not to advance our own purposes, nor to make a great show in the world, nor a name. There is but one just use of power, and it is to serve people. Help us remember, Lord. Amen."

Throughout his 20-minute speech, the newly inaugurated president reiterated that theme of service. He challenged Americans to better their nation and the world through a "new engagement in the lives of others."

Bush, 64, took the presidential oath of office with his left hand placed upon two Bibles — one used by George Washington during his inauguration 200 years ago and the other belonging to the Bush family. The Bibles were open to Matthew 5, which contains Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.

"We are not the sum of our possessions."

As president, Bush committed himself to celebrating the "quieter, deeper successes that are made not of gold and silk but of better hearts and finer souls." He called upon Americans to unite behind the purpose of making "kinder the face of the nation and gentler the face of the world."

"My friends, we are not the sum of our possessions," Bush said. "They are not the measure of our lives. In our hearts, we know what matters. We cannot hope only to leave our children

a bigger car, a bigger bank account.

We must hope to give them a sense of what it means to be a loyal friend, a loving parent, a citizen who leaves his home, his neighborhood, and town better than he found it."

Acknowledging a national deficit that has left the country with "more

The president spoke of such domestic problems as homelessness, drugs, poverty, and crime. He also mentioned the Americans who are held hostage abroad.

"I do not mistrust the future," Bush concluded. "I do not fear what is ahead. For our problems are large, but our heart is larger. Our challenges are great, but our will is greater. And if our flaws are endless, God's love is truly boundless."

"Some see leadership as high drama and the sound of trumpets calling. And sometimes it is that. But I see history as a book with many pages, and each day we fill a page with acts of hopefulness and meaning."

"The new breeze blows, a page turns, the story unfolds. And so today a chapter begins — a small and state-ly story of unity, diversity and generosity — shared and written together."

Kathy Palen writes for the BP Washington bureau.



Senate Pages

Serving as Pages in the Mississippi Senate for a week recently were Renea Smith from the Baptist Children's Village and Robert Bigsby of the Methodist Children's Home. They were sponsored by Senator Bill Harpole of Starkville (standing) and their duties were to assist Lieutenant Governor Brad Dye (seated) and the 52 state senators.

Life-changing experiences asked for Gulfshore wing dedication

Dedication date for the new wing at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Pass Christian, has been set for May 12 and 13, according to Earl Kelly, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Mississippi Baptists are being invited to submit testimonies of the impact of Gulfshore on their lives, Kelly said. The testimonies chosen could become a part of a drama telling the story of Gulfshore that will be staged during the dedication observance. Of particular interest would be those testimonies that would detail experiences from before the destruction of the facility during Hurricane Camille in 1969.

Testimonies should be sent to the office of Earl Kelly, Box 530, Jackson, Miss. 39205.



Powerline for teens

SOUTHERN BAPTIST RADIO-TV COMMISSION / FORT WORTH, TX 76150

"I can't trust anyone"

QUESTION:

I am going through a stage in life where I can't seem to be able to trust anymore. I don't trust other people, myself, or even God. People lie to you and let you down. I always seem to make the wrong decisions. God's promises just don't seem to apply to me. So how can I keep from being disappointed and disillusioned?

ANSWER:

All of us must learn to balance weariness with trust. If we are trustful to the point of being naive, we will be often disappointed. But if we trust no one, we will have poor relationships and an unfulfilling life, for living in society demands an element of trust. So, it's like standing in the middle of a seesaw. You have to learn to keep

your balance.

This means that you have to judge each situation and bit of information as it comes to you. Venture a little trust and see whether the other person is reliable. Test an idea or an experience in small ways before embracing it totally. In other words, reach out in trust, but make that decision on the basis of sound evidence that your trust is merited.

It is crucial that you learn to trust yourself. You have feelings, thoughts, and ideas. When you feel confident about yourself, the attitudes and ideas of others will not be such a negative influence. Here again, it's important to deal with reality, not fantasy. Some people lose confidence in their own judgment because they have made decisions which were not based on facts and sound reasoning.

Finally, we urge you to trust God. He cares for you and he is the author of all truth. Be sure that your understanding of him and his promises is based on reality, not on wrong conclusions or human opinions. He will help you in your learning and your trusting.

Staff changes

Hiram G. Eaves is serving as minister of music and activities at Plainway Church, Laurel. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Garland Eaves. Kent W. Megehee is pastor.

Avera Church, Greene County, has called Arthur Burnett as pastor. He has previously served as pastor in Greene Association, and lives not far from Avera.

Something special?

I must be something special
Among humanity,
For I look good in purple
And pride comes naturally.

I skillfully judge your failures,
Expertly criticize
With arrogance and anger
Self-sufficiency supplies.

Proficiently I hold a fork;
I've read a book or two;
My interest comes in yearly;
That makes me more than you.

Mirrors of the world reflect
A porcelain vessel, fine —
Yet, mirrors of the Lord show
Reality, less kind.

For what have I, I give me,
That Jesus did not pay;
Void of fellowship with Christ,
A dirty clump of clay.

—Erma Jewel Crowe
Greenville



Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



St. John appears at Chunky

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life and the life was the light of men . . .

The face of the speaker was not that of the Apostle John, though it might have resembled him after his beard turned gray. The robe he was wearing was not actually that of John, but possibly John once wore a similar one. This man, dressed like John and speaking words that John wrote, was Lowrey Compere of Route 1, Newton, Mississippi; he was quoting from memory the first three chapters of John's Gospel. His listeners were gathered on a Sunday night at the Baptist church of Chunky, where Wayne Campbell is the pastor.

On the next three nights at Chunky, he led in the January study of the book of John. On Wednesday night, after he had taught a full hour on the final chapters of John, he repeated from memory "The Crucifixion," from Sermons in Verse by James Weldon Johnson. During his dramatic presentation of the poem, the choir at intervals sang "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" Afterward, a hush fell over the room. For long moments, the congregation sat in reverent silence, quite evidently deeply moved.

"Inspiring," some said later. "The

Gospel came alive for me." "A real worship experience."

Playing the part of John was somewhat new to Compere, who is president emeritus of Clarke College, but he has dressed as Simon Peter many times as he quoted from the book of Mark.

In his years of preaching — he was pastor 25 years, before his 22 years at Clarke — he often presented long passages of Scripture from memory. To me, his most astounding memory feat is that of the entire book of Mark. I understand he memorized that book "at an age when most people cease to attempt such feats!"

Only for the past ten years has he been doing his dramatic presentations of the Gospel of Mark. It takes him about two hours to present all 16 chapters. Usually he divides it into several sessions. I heard him once give it during a WMU convention in three or four time slots. His graphic and picturesque version brought the Master's ministry into focus with vividness and power.

Recently his wife, Jacqueline, told me that he has given parts of the Gospel of Mark in 12 states and three islands in the Caribbean, and that he has accepted engagements to present it during this year. Sometimes he quotes a condensed version, "The Heart of Mark's Gospel," and sometimes he leads in "Scripture revivals," giving the book in four or five divisions.



Lowrey Compere appears as the apostle, John.

If he, after being retired since 1977, can repeat from memory 16 chapters of Mark, three chapters of John, the Sermon on the Mount — and I don't know how many more chapters — that makes me believe I could regularly memorize another chapter of the Bible, or two or three.

Devotional

In search of worship

By Dennis K. McIntire

"Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face . . . (Exodus 3:5-6).

More than two decades ago, A. W. Tozer proclaimed, "Worship is the missing jewel of the evangelical church." The search goes on, and for many the jewel remains a mystery.

In recent years there has been much written designed to aid the Christian church in finding and involving people in true worship. Chapter 6 of Isaiah has been studied, dissected, and analyzed. All of the things we should do in worship have been identified, because worship has been identified as a verb. We are actively to "do" something when worshipping.

However, if we read again the passage above, and others such as Isaiah 6, Judges 20:26, Psalm 63 or Acts 13:2-3, it becomes apparent that an important characteristic is present before any overt act of worship takes place. When Moses removed his sandals and hid his face, it was an act of humility. Isaiah's cry came from the realization that he was not worthy to be in the presence of God, a humbling experience. Wearing sackcloth and ashes has been a sign of humility and repentance since the days of the patriarchs.

In our hurried society, which affects church life as all other areas, we must find time to have an "attitude adjustment" when it comes time for corporate worship. Our scheduling programs require that worship be part of a full retinue of activities. We come to that special time with a great amount of excess baggage in the form of frustration, conflict, and fatigue. David's song in Psalm 63 speaks of what it means to be fully satisfied with God alone.

Each of us must learn to use the time prior to scheduled worship activities in ways that will effectively focus our thoughts on the almighty God as we enter his presence. Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no man cometh to the Father but by Me." Remembering the suffering, shame, and ultimate sacrifice should enable us to forget self and the circumstances of life as we prepare to worship the God who reigns in glory.

We need emotionally to take off our sandals and prostrate ourselves in his presence and acknowledge to God that it is only because of his love and the salvation he provided through Jesus Christ that we are able to worship him. And to recognize that worship is a vertical experience (man to God) of adoration and not a horizontal experience (man to man) of fellowship. Then and only then will we be prepared to worship in spirit and in truth as the scripture has commanded.

McIntire is minister of music, Midway Church, Jackson.



McIntire

Southern Baptists are underrepresented in cities

Southern Baptists are not as well-represented in cities as they are in non-metropolitan areas.

"In general, as the size of the geographical area increases, the relative strength of Southern Baptist work decreases," said Clay Price, director of program research for the Home Mission Board.

In the 44 largest metropolitan areas, there is one Southern Baptist church for every 18,700 residents. In smaller cities, the number drops to one church for every 6,600 residents. Non-metropolitan areas have the lowest ratio with one church for every 2,600 residents.

To give a stronger presence in cities, the Home Mission Board has begun a program called "Mega Focus Cities." Using resources at national, state and local levels, foundations are being laid for ministry and witness within the 44 metropolitan areas boasting a population of 1 million or more.

An effective witness in these areas will go a long way, says Price. More than half of the entire nation's population lives in these 44 cities. Another one-fourth of the population lives in the 229 cities with less than 1 million residents. Only one-fourth of the country's residents live in non-metropolitan areas.



This Is The City

Los Angeles (pictured here) and New York City are home to 30 million people. That is approximately the same number of people as live in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, and South Carolina combined. Yet these two major metropolitan areas have only 500 Southern Baptist churches — one for every 63,000 people. The

eight Southern states have 17,000 Southern Baptist churches — one for every 2,000 people. Through the "Mega Focus Cities" program, the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board helps start new churches and ministries in metropolitan areas where the majority of America's unsaved population now lives. (HMB photo by Everett Hullum)

Just for the Record



First Church, Gautier, held its annual Acteen and GA recognition service in October. Acteen director is Barbara Haygood, and Billy R. Williams is pastor. The theme was, "Gifted to Serve, Called to Act."

Acteens, pictured, back row, are Laura Burnette, Vicki Haygood, Kristi Haygood, Angela Hanna, Nikki Curry, Leslie Koski, and Bonnie Barker.

Front row, GAs are Leigh Hanna, Brandy McMaster, Shelli Young, and Maria Smith.



Baptist Student Union officers at East Central Community College for the 1988-89 school term include, seated, from left, Alice Fairley, secretary, daughter Cady Fairley, mascot, Kay Cherry, social chairman, and Kim Pierce, missions chairman, all of Decatur. Kathy Fitzhugh, music chairman, Norton; Amie Cliburn, worship chairman, Union; Christina Edwards, publicity chairman, Philadelphia; standing, from left, Tim Glaze, director, Decatur; Robin Risher, outreach chairman, and Johnny Beaver, enlistment chairman, both of Forest; Kinsey Goldman, president, and Troy Hight, evangelism chairman, both of Philadelphia.



The youths of Parkway Church, Pascagoula, entered a Christmas float in the Christmas parades in Pascagoula and in Moss Point and

won first place in both parades. The youth committee chairman is Pam Broome and the youth director is Murphy Young.

East End Church, Columbus, held a one day January Bible Study, Jan. 15, with 143 registered. The study was led by J. Steve Jackson, pastor. Other leaders were Mrs. Patsy Wilson, First Church, Starkville; Mrs. Margaret Mitchell and Mrs. Sara Jones, First Church, Columbus; and Ron Collins, Fairview Church, Columbus.

Billy Conner was licensed to the gospel ministry Jan. 22 by Woodland Church, Chickasaw County. The pastor is Danny Holland.

Attention, choirs: sing at BWA?

The Baptist World Alliance will convene in Seoul, Korea, Aug. 14-19, 1990. Choirs wishing to assist with the music are requested to contact Leroy Yarbrough at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 3939 Gentilly Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70126.

Malaysian Christian released; others imprisoned for beliefs

One of a dozen Christians, arrested in October 1987 and sentenced without a trial to serve 2 years in prison for their beliefs, received an early release from captivity, according to a report by the World Evangelical Fellowship.

Yeshua Jamaluddin, 28, was released from prison recently after a High Court Judge upheld a writ of Habeas Corpus for him. The Christian Federation of Malaysia says Jamaluddin was detained for sharing his faith with other Malaysians, an activity forbidden under government law. For his

part, Jamaluddin says he was simply answering questions that interested friends asked him. While he said he was aware of the law against witnessing, he said he "felt compelled by my religious convictions to explain the Christian faith to such inquirers."

The Malaysian government charged Jamaluddin, among other things, with strategizing to evangelize certain groups of Malaysians and that a family with whom he had shared the Gospel had converted from Islam to Christianity. Jamaluddin denied ac-

tively disobeying the law.

After his release, the Christian Federation of Malaysia said in a release that the case cast more doubt on the Malaysian government's frequent claims of religious tolerance. The release said that tolerance could hardly include a ban on the possession and use of the Holy Bible by anyone other than those already professing to be Christians and other restrictions on the communication between Christians and people of other religions, all laws existing in the country.

Sticking to missionary purpose is common thread of WMU board meeting

By Susan Todd

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Sticking to a single purpose — missions — was the common thread during the week-long annual executive board meeting of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union Jan. 6-12.

At least three missions leaders spoke to the group about the importance of cooperation, but they also urged independent thinking and action.

"Threats to the concept of cooperation are rampant in our convention today," said WMU Executive Director Carolyn Weatherford. "Rampant" is an adjective that modifies "rampage." Rampage means "a course of violent or riotous action or behavior." Rampant behavior is "unchecked in growth or spread."

"Southern Baptists are in their 11th year of unchecked controversy. We must do something about it, not simply because we don't like controversy, but because controversy has drawn our hearts, minds, and resources away from our major concern — missions."

WMU "cannot be all things to all Baptist women, nor to all Baptist entities," Weatherford said. "We must remember what our task is, and perform to the limit of that task."

Even though WMU members might each like to say the convention controversy has not affected them, it has,

said national WMU President Marjorie J. McCullough.

"The thing that hurts me personally is that I don't know who to trust anymore," she said. "But I'm not willing to give up on the Southern Baptist Convention."

McCullough encouraged the group to keep on having faith in what they are doing to support the convention through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions, through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions and through the Cooperative Program unified budget, which funds the work of the convention.

"Our faith is not based on a (SBC) resolution. We have to keep on believing... and know that no resolution can change our faith," she said.

McCullough also said she knows not

everyone in the SBC thinks WMU is wonderful. Other women's groups are springing up within Southern Baptist churches competing for the time and attention of young women.

WMU must do a better job of "selling" itself, she said. "Missions education is not a priority today in our convention. We want it to be. But it isn't."

In other business the group: — Honored Wendell Belew upon his retirement from the Home Mission Board as associate vice president for mission strategy for his years of coordinating home missions work with WMU.

— Adopted the "Missions Growth Plan," a project to enlist all Southern Baptist church members in missions and to increase WMU membership and organizations by the year 2000.

Susan Todd writes for WMU, SBC.

Revival dates

Arrowood Church, Meridian: will be in revival, Feb. 26-March 1; services nightly at 7; Danny Lanier, guest evangelist; Kevin Griffin, pastor; Jerry Hooks, minister of music.

CLASSIFIED

CHURCH PEW CUSHIONS: Manufactured in our plant. For free estimate contact — Emmons Brothers, P. O. Box 186, Meridian, Miss. 39301. Since 1899. Phone (601) 693-4451.

WHAT ABORTION MEANS for America. Hardhitting, powerful, potent message against America's great curse! \$1.25 each — money back if not blessed. Write: Ray's Study, Box 5435, Midland, TX 79704.

AREA VIDEO PRODUCTION WORKSHOPS

Feb. 28, 1989 — 7-9 p.m. Fairview Baptist Church
Columbus, MS

March 2, 1989 — 7-9 p.m. First Baptist Church,
Laurel, MS

March 3-4, 1989 — 7 p.m. First Baptist Church
on the 3rd — 12 noon Brandon, MS
on the 4th

SCRIPTWRITING
FOR
TELEVISION



**LEADER
FRANK OLSEN**

Professional writer for 43 years, writer-producer at ABC Television, presently teaching broadcast writing at Southwestern B.T.S., Fort Worth

Bring your local programming ideas (on videotape — 1/2-inch) and share them.

For further information contact
Farrell Blankenship, Department Of Broadcast Services
P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530

LOCAL
PROGRAMMING
AND
SPOT IDEAS



**LEADER
CHIP TURNER**

Director of Media Services for Louisiana Baptist Convention, Alexandria, Louisiana, author of "The Church Video Answer-book"

Senior Adult Corner

The Poplar Saints, senior adult club of First Church, Poplarville, has invited Molly Fairchild to be their guest speaker on Friday, Feb. 10. Mrs. Fairchild, Moselle, is a ventriloquist and author of the book, *God's Rag Doll*. She has assisted in revival crusades in India.

The Poplar Saints meet at 11 a.m. the second Friday of each month, according to Mary Young, their president. Each brings a covered dish. Then after lunch they have a program.

In May, they have a picnic which includes the Senior Olympics, with crazy prizes given. Each month, two members are in charge of the program and four are in charge of kitchen work. In June, July, and August



Molly Fairchild

they are "off for the summer."

J. D. Batson, minister of music, is also the minister of senior adults. Barry Corbett is pastor.

Evangelistic missions highlights teleconference

By Bill Bangham

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — For the past eight years, Paul Schlett has shared his faith in countries across the globe. And his company has paid his way.

Schlett, a ceramics engineer for Exxon Corp. whose expertise in oil refining is in demand around the world, sees his evangelistic efforts as a natural extension of his faith in Jesus Christ, he told viewers of the 1989 Baptist Men's Teleconference.

"If I cannot share my faith in some way and be ready to give an account of the hope that's within me, then my job is worth nothing," said Schlett, president of the New York Baptist Men organization.

Sponsored by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, the theme for the live telecast was "Missions Involvement through Evangelism."

Greg Finch found his commitment to evangelism in a partnership crusade in the Philippines. "I grew up thinking missions was for those other people, particularly foreign missions," he said.

"I'd never shared my testimony in public let alone anything else," he said. But not enough pastors applied for the program, and the Kansas City, Kan., native found himself leading a crusade in a city on the island of Mindanao.

Filipino Baptists announced, "The great American evangelist, Greg Finch, has arrived," he said. As many

as 5,000 attended the services, and by the end of the crusade, 287 of them had made professions of faith in Christ.

Today Finch is part of Wellspring Volunteer Missions Foundation, a non-profit organization that sends 100 lay people a year from the Kansas-Nebraska Baptist Convention overseas on partnership evangelism and church building projects.

James McCollough works two jobs and is a Missions Service Corps volunteer helping California Baptists develop Royal Ambassador chapters to teach boys about Christian missions. The Long Beach resident has been in 90 churches during the past two years. Yet he found an evangelistic outreach through hitchhiking.

"The people who stop, I know God touched them to stop," he said. "I weigh 340 pounds. When they stop, I know the Lord has called them. And the purpose is, what is my mission to them now? What would God have me do to them?"

Nelson Sosa discovered that God can use people, no matter what their vocations. When he first came to Miami from Cuba 10 years ago, people would tell him that some day he would become a preacher. But in that time he has composed 62 hymns and has seen people come to Christ through his music.

Bill Bangham writes for the Brotherhood Commission.

Names in the news



Rex Yancey, pastor, First Church, Quitman, presents a plaque to Mildred Ivy in appreciation for her work as church housekeeper. Ms. Ivy, a lifetime member of First Church, retired on Jan. 1 after 11 years in the position.

Russell Naron begins his sixth year as pastor of Euclid Avenue Church, Bristol, Va. He served on the General Baptist Board of Virginia for three

years and was re-elected to a second term on the Executive Committee. Naron, a graduate of New Orleans Seminary, served Mississippi Baptist churches for 20 years. His former pastorates include Calvary, Natchez and Woolmarket, Biloxi.

Charles and Indy Whitten, retired missionaries to Equatorial Guinea, who were last year missionaries-in-residence at the Missionary Learning Center, Rockville, Va., have now moved to 108 West Lakeview, Clinton, MS 39056 (phone 924-1340).

Archie McIntyre was honored on his retirement at Elim Church, Quitman, with a reception on Jan. 29. He has served Elim Church as pastor since 1981. McIntyre entered the ministry in 1951 and received the master of divinity degree from New Orleans Seminary in 1958.

Mississippi Baptist activities

- Feb. 5 Christian Action Commission Sunday (CAC Emphasis)
- Feb. 6-8 Evangelism Conference; FBC, Meridian; 6:30 p.m., 6th-noon, 8th (EVAN)
- Feb. 11 Small Church Leadership Conference; Mississippi College, Clinton; 9:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m. (PD)

Mississippi College will host meet for small church leaders

Mississippi College in Clinton will host the next in the continuing series of conferences for leadership of small churches.

The Small Church Leadership Training Conference will take place Feb. 11, 9:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. It is especially designed for churches with 150 or fewer persons enrolled in Sunday School.

Included with the training for 24 separate leader groups will be preaching, music, and lunch. The lunch is provided by the sponsor of the event, which is the program director's office of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Pre-registration is requested so that

lunch may be prepared accordingly. Contact the local Baptist association office by Feb. 6.

The leader training conferences include sessions for pastors; deacon chairmen; Sunday School directors and workers with adults, youths, children, and preschoolers; church training directors and workers with adults, youths, children, and preschoolers. Woman's Missionary Union directors and workers with Baptist Women, Baptist Young Women, Acteens, GAs, and Mission Friends; Baptist men and RA leaders; volunteer music directors church pianists, and preschool and children's music leaders.

Health Careers Day: Feb. 16

Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson is sponsoring a Health Careers Day Feb. 16, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. for high school and college students who are interested in Medical Technology or Radiography. Instructors and students from MBMC's School of Medical Technology and School of

Radiography will discuss education requirements and job opportunities in these fields and will give tours of their departments.

To register, contact Kathy Bearden, director of student activities, at 968-5144 no later than Feb. 9. Attendance is limited.

Family care next decade is theme

"Caring for the Family of the 90s" will be the theme of the Family Enrichment Leadership Training



Register

Workshop to be conducted at New Orleans Seminary Feb. 23-25. Dean Register, pastor of First Church, Gulfport, will be the keynote speaker on the subject "Facing the Challenge of the Changing Family." Others participating on the program from Mississippi are J. Clark Hensley, family ministry, MBCB; Ron Mumbower, First Church, Jackson, and Ronnie Cottingham, family evangelism, Lucedale. From the seminary faculty: Macklyn Hubbell, Joe Trull and Carol Freeman from Louisiana Baptist Convention, Mark Short and Ray Wells and from Baptist Sunday School Board Jim Hightower and Ken Jordan. These represent the institutions and agencies jointly sponsoring the workshop.

All phases of Family Ministry work will be addressed including "Caring for Families — a New Way to do Church," "Creating a Climate in Your Church to Strengthen Families," "The Act of Pastoral Care," "Caring for Families in Crisis," and "Providing for Care from the Pulpit — Preaching to Strengthen Families."

The sessions begin on Thursday afternoon and close at noon on Saturday. A registration fee of \$25 will pay toward cost of materials. For more information, write Paul Robertson, Continuing Education, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 3939 Gentilly Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70126.

Thursday, February 2, 1989

Pianos at Warehouse prices

Exclusive dealers for
Steinway - Kawai - Wurilizer
Weber - Kimball
Financing Available
MC/VISA/American Express

Allegrezza

Piano Company

226 Hwy. 51 N. Tim Kelly, Manager
Ridgeland 856-2524

CHURCH FURNITURE

For Quality and Low Prices

Wallace Foy
171 Westover Dr.
Clarksdale, MS 38814
601-824-8926



FIBERGLASS BAPTISTRIES
STEEPLES—CROSSES
WATER HEATERS

DIAL TOLL FREE
1-800-231-6035

LITTLE GIANT MANUFACTURING CO., INC.
Dept. 61 / Box 518 / Orange, Texas 77630
IN TEXAS: (409) 863-4346

CHURCH PEWS, INC.

makers of
Fine Quality, Solid
Wood Furniture

In AL — 1-800-828-8376
Out-of-state — 1-800-522-5014

STATE

EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

February 6-8, 1989

Begins 6:30 p.m. Monday 'til 11:20 a.m. Wednesday

First Baptist Church, Meridian

Hear outstanding evangelists, pastors, lay persons, preaching, teaching and singing

Theme: "Making Jesus Your Lord"

HEADQUARTERS

FOR ALL TYPES OF

School & Church Furniture

• Complete stock of chairs, tables, desks and furnishings for Classroom, Library, Sunday School, Auditorium, Cafeteria and every School and Church use.

EVERYTHING FOR
THE SCHOOL
AND CHURCH

MISSISSIPPI
School Supply Co.
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

Buses For Sale



We accept
trade-ins

Large selection of new and used buses in stock.

Call today!

Toll Free

1-800-851-5054

ARKANSAS BUS EXCHANGE

P. O. Box 9006 — Pine Bluff, AR 71611

501-536-7795 (in Ark.)

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COMMENTARIES

Faithfulness endures, despite continued opposition

By Bert Breland
Acts 5:12-42

Following the story of Ananias and Sapphira, Luke records another brief summary of the church's activities in verses 12-16. His account is filled with "signs and wonders" and emphasizes the popularity that the apostles have gained. The church was also growing at an unprecedented rate during this time of miracles.



Breland

With all of these things transpiring it isn't hard to understand why the Sadducees mounted another attack on the church. They were feeling very threatened by the popularity of this new movement. They were afraid of losing their position of importance with the Roman government and with the Jewish people.

The high priest, along with his associates on the Sanhedrin, ordered the arrest of the apostles and had them put in jail. This arrest varies from the arrest in chapter 4 in that all of the apostles were put in jail rather than just Peter and John. Also, this arrest resulted in a

BIBLE BOOK

severe beating, whereas in chapter 4 all they received was a tongue lashing. This arrest also differs in that it is temporarily interrupted by an angel from the Lord.

During the night an angel opened the gates of the prison cells and took them out of the jail. His only message to them was that they should go right back to the temple and preach the "whole message of this life." This was no small assignment. They were being asked to go back to the hot spot and proclaim the same message that got them thrown into prison in the first place. To return to the place of their strongest opposition was not easy. Yet they went and they spoke to the people. It never has been difficult to get Christian people to speak; the difficulty has been getting them to speak in the right places.

It seems almost comical to me that while the Sanhedrin was meeting to decide what to do with these renegade teachers, these teachers were back in the temple teaching. I am sure that they were greatly surprised to find the jail securely locked and the apostles gone. However,

I'm equally sure that the apostles were not surprised when they were arrested again and brought before the council.

The high priest was quite indignant when he began his questioning of the apostles. He could not believe that they continued to teach in the name of Jesus after they were expressly ordered to stop. He could not understand because he could not comprehend the depth of their commitment to fulfill the great commission.

Peter tried to explain their unwillingness to follow his orders by declaring that they "must obey God rather than man." Peter continued his sermon with his favorite theme, "Jesus is Lord!" He did this for the sake of the high priest so that he would understand that Peter did not consider him as lord. Therefore, when it came to obedience, there was no question as to whom Peter and the apostles must obey.

These remarks infuriated the high priest and most of the council to the point that they wanted to kill them. Had it not been for the intervention of Gamaliel, they might have tried to fulfill their evil intent. Gamaliel was a Pharisee and a respected teacher of the law. He reasoned with the rest of the council not to act hastily.

His argument was simple and yet profound: if this movement isn't of God it will soon die, and if it is of God we would be found fighting against God.

The wisdom of Gamaliel prevailed, and the council members repented of their rash intention. However, all of the credit probably doesn't belong to Gamaliel. The fact is that this group had no power under Roman rule to execute anyone. If they had usurped that power, they would have been in deep trouble with the Roman government, not to mention the masses of people who were following the apostles. The council had to settle with having them beaten and once again warned not to teach in the name of Jesus.

The most miraculous thing about this entire story is the response of the apostles after they had been flogged. They did not go away lamenting how they had been treated; but rather, they went away rejoicing that they had been considered "worthy to suffer shame for his name." This very attitude gave the apostles the strength and the desire to continue "teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ."

Breland is pastor, North Greenwood Church, Greenwood.

Can we limit our liberty for the sake of others?

By J. Greg Martin
I Corinthians 8:1, 4-13

What is right? What is wrong? Is it a sin for a Christian to go to a movie theater? Does God care if women wear pants to church? What does the Bible say about playing a card game? These questions often come up in the course of one's Christian experience. Playing cards, wearing slacks, going to movies, etc., are what we call "grey areas." Some think they are sin. Others do not see them that way. None of these issues are mentioned specifically in the Bible. However, they seem to occupy much of the time in some pulpits.



Martin

Paul addresses questionable issues in I Corinthians 8. His culture wrestled with the issue of eating meat that had been offered to idols. Some said it was not good for a Christian's consumption. Paul knew better, verses 4-6. He knew an idol could not corrupt food. In Corinth the meat was offered to an idol at the pagan temple and then sold in the marketplace. Even though Christians were not worshipping at the pagan temple, some thought the food from there carried an evil force with it. Hence, they said it was a sin for a believer to partake of the meat.

LIFE AND WORK

In dealing with this problem, Paul calls for a priority to be put on love, verse 1. It does a Christian no good to have freedom from legalism if he does not have love. Knowledge alone often leads to arrogance. Love mixed with knowledge can edify the church.

Paul demonstrates this mixture of love and knowledge in two ways. First, he teaches that there is nothing wrong with the meat from the pagan temples, verses 4-6, 8. This is confirmed in Acts 10:10-28; 28; I Timothy 4:4-5; Mark 7:15. Paul does not compromise the integrity of his convictions for the sake of those who are less knowledgeable. To do this would only facilitate spiritual ignorance concerning the freedom that is in Christ.

Another way in which he demonstrates the

balance of love and knowledge is seen in his refusal to eat the questionable meat. He knew it was clean before God, but he did not want to cause those without that knowledge to stumble. Paul surrendered his right to eat the meat in order to keep those with a weak conscience from stumbling.

I once heard of a pastor who refused to go to a Sunday afternoon baseball game because it might cause a member of his church to stumble spiritually. The new convert was one who associated Sunday afternoon baseball with sin, because before his conversion baseball had kept him from Christ. We all know baseball is harmless, but it could be something we are called on to forsake for someone's conscience.

It takes a mature believer, like Paul and the pastor I mentioned, to give up something for the sake of others. The issue is surrendering our rights. Are we willing to live only for self, or for others and the kingdom of God? Surrendering our rights is never easy, but is essential. We are called upon to live a life crucified unto Christ (Galatians 2:20). In Christ we are to see ourselves as surrendered totally to him. When we do this, our rights are not as important as

we first presumed. If Paul could deny himself a basic necessity like meat, can't we deny ourselves a trip to the movie theater or a card game, if we know it offends a new Christian?

When we fail to surrender our rights, we sin against our weaker brother, verse 12. Playing a game of "Rook" may not be viewed in your eyes as a great sin against God. However, if it causes someone who has just been saved out of a life of gambling to associate you with the gambling industry, then your sin against him in turn is a sin against God. Verse 12 states that when we sin against someone, we wound them. The word "wound" is the same word found in Matthew 27:30, referring to our Lord's beating. None of us would surely inflict crucifixion pain on another member of the body of Christ.

Our task is not to cause others to stumble but rather to edify them in love. This building up process is often accomplished when we let Jesus have everything in our lives — our attitudes, desires, possessions, and future. When we view him as the owner of our total beings, giving up our rights is not as hard as we think.

Martin is pastor, Commission Road Church, Long Beach.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God . . ."

By Gary G. Berry
Luke 12:13-34

A crowd of hundreds, perhaps thousands (12:1) gathered to hear Jesus teach. A man in the crowd who was involved in an inheritance dispute with his brother asked Jesus to intervene and issue a settlement (12:13).



Berry

Jesus, recognizing the man's preoccupation (obsession) with getting all he could from the estate, refused to intervene (12:14). A lawyer once reassured his client that he would get for her everything that was rightfully hers in her divorce settlement. She replied, "What do you mean 'what is right'? Any lawyer could get that for me. I am paying you to get everything." Undoubtedly, Jesus recognized that spirit of covetousness in the questioner from the crowd.

In fact, Jesus used the man's question as a springboard for teaching about covetousness. These words of our Lord have never been more relevant than in our society. The word "covetousness" actually refers to a greedy desire for more material things, a desire that

UNIFORM

may become so obsessive that one loses sight of what is right or reasonable. We have given respectability to that attitude in our society, seeing it primarily as "thrifty" or "good business." There is a point at which the desire for more ceases to be admirable and becomes a sin which destroys everyone and everything in its path. Real life does not equal the sum total of what a person possesses (12:15).

Making this truth live before the multitude, Jesus told them a parable of a rich man who played the fool (12:16ff). He illustrated the foolishness of trusting in material things for well-being. This man who was a farmer, on the very night his bumper harvest was stored in his new barns, was required to give up his soul. On that night as he confronted death, God and eternity, none of the material things he had accumulated were any worth to him. By the standards of men, he was very successful. By God's standards he was a total failure.

How many times is that parable actually lived out before us? A person shuts out God, family, home, and church in order to make the

business grow, or the farm more profitable. Scores are "driven" by the desire to get "to the top" or become millionaires. In the process they lose the most precious possessions and relationships a man is capable of enjoying.

In the final section of this text (verses 22-34) Jesus turns his attention to his disciples. The moment of opportunity was present to teach these disciples how these truths applied to their lives, and thus to our lives as well.

The statement, "take no thought," comes from a word which means "stop pulling yourself in two by allowing yourself to be tugged at by two opposite principles of life." "Stop worrying" is the clear meaning of what Jesus said. I have known few people who had no need of hearing this strong statement from Jesus. "Do not become anxious about providing food to sustain your life and clothing to cover your body." God helps the ravens who do what they can daily to find food for the day. The child of God should know that he is more precious to God than the ravens.

Any reasonable person should be impacted by what Jesus said in verse 25. Being anxious (worrying) about food and clothing (or anything else) will never prolong life for us.

Physicians tell us that stress and worry shorten life. Worry is useless. It is counterproductive. Worry is nothing more than faithlessness behind a mask.

For the Christian there is an alternative to being obsessed with the accumulation of things and the worry of keeping them. Jesus stressed that his disciples should place priority on seeking God's kingdom. The "kingdom of God" refers to the rule or the reign of God in the heart of an individual or in society as a whole. This is one of the greatest promises in the Bible: if we are seeking first to allow God to reign as Lord in our lives, then God will provide the other things which are necessary for life (12:31). The commitment of our lives to God, and the Lordship of Jesus in our lives should come first instead of next.

As a child of God, you can trust God to meet your needs. Worry, doubt, and the greedy desire for more are not only unnecessary, but sinful. What could be more eternally meaningful than using our possessions to reach lost people and win them to Jesus? Our investment of life and possessions in the kingdom of God brings long-term dividends, compounded daily, forever.

Berry is pastor, First, McComb.

THE VILLAGE VIEW

The Baptist Children's Village

Paul N. Nunnery, Executive Director

P. O. Box 27, Clinton, MS 39060-0027, (601) 922-2242

Accredited by the National Association of Homes for Children
Licensed by the State of Mississippi



Honor Roll of Churches

Each January, we review and analyze cash gifts received in Village offices during the preceding calendar year. One of the more interesting and gratifying facets of this analysis is a listing of Mississippi Baptist churches in the order of their designated cash gifts to our ministry — the "Honor Roll of Churches." Fewer local churches (1503) made designated gifts to our ministry in 1988 than during any year since 1984. However, during 1988, 217 local churches contributed \$1,000.00 or more in gifts to the Village which reached our offices by December 31. According to our records, these "top 217" churches were:

MEMORIALS Nov. 19, 1988 - Dec. 15, 1988

Rev. Barney Walker
Mr. & Mrs. Harold C. Brumfield
Mr. J. Herman Walter
Mr. & Mrs. H. P. McCain Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. W. M. McKell
Mr. Clarence W. Walters
Mrs. Tom S. Glenn
Mr. & Mrs. H. D. McMorrough
Mr. & Mrs. Sherrell Sturdivant
Zelton Walters
Mr. & Mrs. G. C. Hankins
Mrs. James M. Ward
Mr. Charles Gates
Mr. Mary G. Gates
Mrs. Lois Ward
Mrs. Bessie A. Saway
Clarence Weeks
Mrs. J. L. Martin
Richard (Dick) Welch
Mr. & Mrs. Lamont Jarrell
Mrs. Dorothy Wells
Mr. B. F. Wells
Suzette Wenger
Callie D. Chism Sunday School
Mrs. Leacy White
Mr. & Mrs. Sherrell Sturdivant
Mrs. Robert White
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry W. Carpenter
Dr. John Whitfield
Jack & Rogenia Clanton
Mrs. D. C. Dear
First Baptist Church
Mary Ann & Charles Goodson
Richard & Mandi Goodson
Melinda Howton
Mr. & Mrs. H. M. Nicholson
Mrs. Robert E. Weathersby
Burke Handling Systems
Mr. & Mrs. James W. Henry Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Clifton Broadwater
Mrs. Lorayne W. Westbrook
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth M. Shores

(To be continued)

RANK CHURCH NAME

1.	First Baptist Church
2.	First Baptist Church, Jackson
3.	Hillcrest Baptist Church
4.	First Baptist Church
5.	First Baptist Church
6.	Rolling Creek Baptist Church
7.	Morrison Heights Baptist Church
8.	First Baptist Church
9.	Raymond Baptist Church
10.	First Baptist Church
11.	Forest Baptist Church
12.	Temple Baptist Church
13.	First Baptist Church
14.	First Baptist Church
15.	Briar Hill Baptist Church
16.	Williamsville Baptist Church
17.	Parkway Baptist Church
18.	First Baptist Church
19.	Mount Moriah Baptist Church
20.	Ingomar Baptist Church
21.	Roseland Park Baptist Church
22.	Van Winkle Baptist Church
23.	Meadville Baptist Church
24.	First Baptist Church
25.	State Boulevard Baptist Church
26.	Tate Street Baptist Church
27.	First Baptist Church
28.	First Baptist Church
29.	Woodland Hills Baptist Church
30.	First Baptist Church
31.	Droadmoor Baptist Church
32.	First Baptist Church
33.	First Baptist Church
34.	North Greenwood Baptist Church
35.	Mount Zion Baptist Church-Tate
36.	First Baptist Church
37.	First Baptist Church
38.	First Baptist Church
39.	Algoma Baptist Church
40.	First Baptist Church
41.	Hollandale Baptist Church
42.	Concord Baptist Church
43.	First Baptist Church
44.	Calvary Baptist Church
45.	First Baptist Church
46.	First Baptist Church
47.	Northwest Baptist Association
48.	Midway Baptist Church
49.	Big Creek Baptist Church
50.	First Baptist Church
51.	First Baptist Church
52.	First Baptist Church
53.	Liberty Baptist Church
54.	First Baptist Church
55.	Liberty Baptist Church
56.	Union Seminary Baptist Church
57.	First Baptist Church
58.	Phalti Baptist Church
59.	Sylvarena Baptist Church
60.	West Jackson Street Church
61.	First Baptist Church
62.	Mount Horeb Baptist Church
63.	First Baptist Church
64.	Crowder Baptist Church
65.	Northminster Baptist Church
66.	Shuqualak Baptist Church
67.	First Baptist Church, Sardis
68.	East Fork Baptist Church
69.	DeKalb Baptist Church
70.	First Baptist Church
71.	Gaston Baptist Church
72.	First Baptist Church
73.	Noxapater Baptist Church
74.	Indian Springs Baptist Church
75.	Fellowship Baptist Church
76.	Shiloh Baptist Church
77.	Carmel Baptist Church
78.	Holcomb Baptist Church
79.	First Baptist Church
80.	Colonial Heights Baptist Church
81.	Second Baptist Church
82.	Rienzi Baptist Church
83.	Oak Forest Baptist Church
84.	First Baptist Church
85.	Society Hill Baptist Church
86.	First Baptist Church
87.	Central Baptist Church
88.	Bethel Baptist Church
89.	Tylertown Baptist Church
90.	North Winona Baptist Church
91.	Bunker Hill Baptist Church
92.	Fairview Baptist Church
93.	Bethsaida Baptist Church
94.	Central Baptist Church
95.	Navilla Baptist Church
96.	Harrisburg Baptist Church
97.	Ephesus Baptist Church
98.	Mount Zion Baptist Church-DeSoto
99.	First Baptist Church
100.	First Baptist Church
101.	Pearson Baptist Church

CHURCH CITY

Water Valley	52461.25
Jackson	19642.57
Jackson	9224.00
Booneville	8884.86
Vicksburg	8654.45
Quitman	8635.30
Clinton	8424.00
Indianola	6645.42
Raymond	6575.00
Greenville	6221.31
Forest	6004.00
Hattiesburg	5826.30
Greenwood	5471.00
Louisville	5259.05
Florence	4873.00
Kosciusko	4655.00
Jackson	4554.94
Crystal Springs	4526.78
Bogue Chitto	4230.20
New Albany	4227.33
Picayune	4190.00
Jackson	4156.12
Meadville	4043.05
Clinton	4002.90
Meridian	3897.10
Corinth	3803.56
Grenada	3764.08
Bruce	3760.50
Jackson	3759.60
Brandon	3739.03
Jackson	3602.07
Amory	3580.00
Richton	3531.50
Greenwood	3461.59
Independence	3441.48
Hazlehurst	3440.81
Laurel	3378.44
Gulfport	3344.22
Algoma	3275.45
Winona	3262.00
Hollandale	3235.00
McCall Creek	3153.37
Meridian	3063.75
Jackson	3062.00
Quitman	3031.25
Eupora	3030.69
Hernando	3000.00
Meridian	3000.00
Big Creek	2939.37
Union	2935.00
Columbus	2879.45
Aberdeen	2791.00
Liberty	2790.92
Coldwater	2711.80
New Albany	2700.00
Laurel	2639.89
Leland	2630.75
Prentiss	2574.43
Raleigh	2558.72
Tupelo	2500.00
Batesville	2495.51
Meridian	2471.95
West Point	2453.05
Crowder	2432.53
Jackson	2416.00
Shuqualak	2415.00
Sardis	2386.00
Smithdale	2295.00
DeKalb	2292.53
Itta Bena	2286.94
Booneville	2286.85
McComb	2272.70
Noxapater	2221.83
Hattiesburg	2170.00
Meridian	2155.69
Big Creek	2150.72
Meridian	2115.50
Holcomb	2065.21
Coffeeville	2060.90
Jackson	2042.26
Indianola	2040.18
Rienzi	2039.35
Jackson	2032.65
Carthage	2021.95
Oak Vale	2015.41
Ripley	2001.67
McComb	1985.66
Poplarville	1982.27
Tylertown	1981.59
Winona	1980.00
Columbia	1961.22
Columbus	1947.00
French Camp	1924.15
McNeill	1903.50
McComb	1902.18
Tupelo	1819.00
Forest	1818.00
Hernando	1804.00
Charleston	1783.48
Senatobia	1783.46
Pearl	1780.00

102.	North Batesville Baptist Church
103.	Calvary Baptist Church
104.	West Union Baptist Church
105.	First Baptist Church
106.	Unity Baptist Church
107.	First Baptist Church
108.	Highland Baptist Church
109.	First Baptist Church
110.	Alta Woods Baptist Church
111.	Macedonia Baptist Church
112.	First Baptist Church
113.	Edna Baptist Church
114.	Providence Baptist Church
115.	Leaf Baptist Church
116.	First Baptist Church
117.	Washington Baptist Church
118.	Emmanuel Baptist Church
119.	Second Baptist Church
120.	Moak's Creek Baptist Church
121.	Poplar Springs Drive Baptist Church
122.	Indian Springs Baptist Church
123.	Galilee Baptist Church
124.	Pearl River Baptist Assoc.
125.	Springfield Baptist Church
126.	Macedonia Baptist Church
127.	Grays Creek Baptist Church
128.	First Baptist Church
129.	Hurricane Creek Baptist Church
130.	Calvary Baptist Church
131.	Berwick Baptist Church
132.	First Baptist Church
133.	First Baptist Church
134.	Friendship Baptist Church
135.	Enon Baptist Church
136.	Lawn Haven Baptist Church
137.	Daniel Memorial Baptist Church
138.	First Baptist Church
139.	Calvary Baptist Church
140.	First Baptist Church
141.	Gooden Lake Baptist Church
142.	First Baptist Church
143.	Sallis Baptist Church
144.	Riverside Baptist Church
145.	Main Street Baptist Church
146.	Taylor Baptist Church
147.	Northside Baptist Church
148.	New Prospect Baptist Church
149.	First Baptist Church
150.	Bethlehem Baptist Church
151.	Kolola Springs Baptist Church
152.	Flora Baptist Church
153.	Lexie Baptist Church
154.	First Baptist Church
155.	Topeka Baptist Church
156.	First Baptist Church
157.	Port Gibson Baptist Church
158.	Parkway Baptist Church
159.	First Baptist Church
160.	Plainway Baptist Church
161.	New Palestine Baptist Church
162.	First Baptist Church
163.	First Baptist Church
164.	Pocahontas Baptist Church
165.	Seminary Baptist Church
166.	First Baptist Church
167.	Beulah Baptist Church
168.	Mount Zion Baptist Church
169.	Gallman Baptist Church
170.	Grace Memorial Baptist Church
171.	East End Baptist Church
172.	First Baptist Church
173.	Pilgrim's Rest Baptist Church
174.	Oak Grove Baptist Church
175.	Trinity First Baptist Church
176.	Colonial Hills Baptist Church
177.	First Baptist Church
178.	Pinelake Baptist Church
179.	Edgeworth Baptist Church
180.	Ackerman Baptist Church
181.	Poplar Springs Baptist Church
182.	Belden Baptist Church
183.	East Philadelphia Baptist Church
184.	Georgetown Baptist Church
185.	Calvary Baptist Church
186.	West Baptist Church
187.	Wildwood Baptist Church
188.	Macedonia Baptist Church
189.	Center Baptist Church
190.	Old Silver Creek Baptist Church
191.	Oakdale Baptist Church
192.	Crestview Baptist Church
193.	Antioch Baptist Church
194.	Mars Hill Baptist Church
195.	Pleasant Hill Baptist Church
196.	Newhebron Baptist Church
197.	Mount Moriah Baptist Church
198.	Amaziah Baptist Church
199.	Dry Creek Baptist Church
200.	Madden Baptist Church
201.	New Harmony Baptist Church
202.	Pine Crest Baptist Church
203.	Learned Baptist Church
204.	Jericho Baptist Church
205.	Misc. Church Designations
206.	Bailey Baptist Church
207.	First Baptist Church
208.	Salem Baptist Church
209.	Ebenezer Baptist Church
210.	Dundee Baptist Church
211.	Pine Forest Baptist Church
212.	New Hope Baptist Church
213.	Calvary Baptist Church
214.	Mount Zion Baptist Church
215.	West Kemper Baptist Church
216.	Pine Bluff Baptist Church
217.	Providence Baptist Church

Batesville	1779.53
West Point	1766.69
Carriere	1751.46
Anguilla	1740.00
Picayune	1730.75
Pontotoc	1720.36
Meridian	1710.75
Natchez	1697.00
Jackson	1675.76
Brookhaven	1663.36
Magee	1657.00
Columbia	1631.10
Cleveland	1617.85
Leaf	1606.74
Corinth	1605.04
Washington	1596.54
Greenville	1583.46
Greenville	1574.50
Bogue Chitto	1570.75
Meridian	1554.50
Laurel	1552.11
Gloster	1552.00
Carriere	1542.50
Morton	1528.25
Louisville	1508.00
Hernando	1498.91
Hattiesburg	1484.00
Sandy Hook	1465.58
Tupelo	1458.00
Liberty	1449.00
Carriere	1428.00
Brookhaven	1425.00
Sturgis	1420.85
Jayess	1405.00
Laurel	1402.70
Jackson	1400.00
New Augusta	1400.00
Cleveland	1389.20
Maben	1388.50
Belzoni	1382.02
Rolling Fork	1377.65
Sallis	1370.40
Pascagoula	1368.19
Hattiesburg	1363.75
Taylor	1358.30
Clinton	1355.00
Oxford	1341.79
Cleveland	1335.00
Pinola	1330.46
Caledonia	1320.00
Flora	1317.55
Tylertown	1315.05
Kosciusko	1308.00
Jayess	1304.67
Baldwyn	1302.00
Port Gibson	1288.00
Kosciusko	1287.76
Marks	1265.00
Laurel	1261.00
Picayune	1257.35
Waynesboro	1257.00
Calhoun City	1256.50
Clinton	1250.00
Seminary	1246.25
Oxford	1245.50
Bolton	1242.03
Florence	1233.00
Gallman	1232.78
Gulfport	1225.00
Columbus	1211.00
Pascagoula	1200.41
Crystal Springs	1200.00
Mendenhall	1200.00
Waynesboro	1174.92
Southaven	1174.54
Yazoo City	1170.00
Brandon	1163.00
Eupora	1161.00
Ackerman	1157.84
Newton	1154.38
Beldin	1154.00
Philadelphia	1142.16
Georgetown	1135.48
Greenwood	1131.00
West	1125.00
Clinton	1115.35
Myrtle	1114.82
Blue Springs	1103.20
Silver Creek	1100.56
Brandon	1100.00
Petal	1100.00
Prentiss	1090.00
Summit	1090.00
Quitman	1078.63
Newhebron	1077.00
Bruce	1074.57
Hickory Flat	1073.64
Mendenhall	1073.00
Madden	1070.18
Blue Springs	1060.77
Star	1054.00
Learned	1050.00
Baldwyn	1037.00
Jackson	1032.83
Bailey	1026.58
Tupelo	1024.60
Raymond	1011.00
Centerville	1003.53
Tunica	1000.00
Collinsville	1000.00
Meridian	1000.00
Belmont	1000.00
Taylorville	1000.00
DeKalb	1000.00
Pheba	1000.00
Yazoo City	1000.00

capsules

\$200,000 goes to Second Century Fund

By Susan Todd

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — The Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union's executive board announced Jan. 9 it had donated \$200,000 to the two-year-old Second Century Fund. The contribution brings the total amount in the fund to \$414,000.

WMU established the Second Century Fund, a permanent endowment, to observe its centennial year, 1988. The fund was created as a gift to future generations of women in missions. All contributions are invested permanently. Only the interest earned on the principal is given as grants.

The grants are given to develop women's missions organizations abroad; to enhance WMU leadership development in the United States; and to foster education about missions and WMU among Southern Baptist seminary students and faculty.

From the interest earned on the fund's investment and from a supplement from the executive board, more than \$59,000 in grants were awarded to 13 recipients during the annual January meeting, WMU leaders said. Included was \$8,000 to assist the Colorado WMU in its first year as an auxiliary to the state convention, \$5,410 to produce WMU literature in Cambodian, Arabic, and Korean languages; and \$14,375 to assist the WMU of Korea to launch missions education work for children 7-12.

Supreme Court accepts Missouri abortion case

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to review the constitutionality of a Missouri abortion law.

The 1986 law states that human life "begins at conception" and "unborn children have protectable interests in life, health, and well-being." It prohibits the use of public funds, employees, and facilities for "performing or assisting" an abortion or "encouraging or counseling" a woman to have an abortion not necessary to save her life. The law also requires doctors to perform tests to determine the viability of any fetus 20 weeks old or older.

Following a legal challenge filed by five publicly employed doctors and nurses and two non-profit corporations, the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals struck down specific provisions of the Missouri law last July.

The federal appeals court held the law's preamble statement that life begins at conception is "simply an impermissible state adoption of a theory of when life begins to justify its abortion regulations."

SBC teams begin rebuilding in Jamaica

By Bill Bangham

MONEAGUE, Jamaica (BP) — In the wake of hurricane Gilbert, Southern Baptists are responding to the needs of Baptists in Jamaica. The first of 800 to 1,000 Southern Baptist volunteers currently are on the Caribbean island at the invitation of the Jamaica Baptist Union.

Construction materials bought with Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board relief funds arrived on the island the week before Christmas.

Volunteers enlisted through the board and the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission arrived after the first of the year to begin repairs on more than 100 churches damaged by the hurricane.

Gilbert roared ashore last September, rocketing west across the island-nation with 160 mile-per-hour winds. Crops were lost and communities devastated. More than 80 percent of the housing on the island sustained damage. Relief poured in from around the globe.

"Amongst the first to respond, as usual, was the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention," said Gawley Bolt, executive director of the Jamaica Baptist Union.

FMB funding tops 'Answerline'

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Questions and concerns about foreign missions funding accounted for nearly half the calls received by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's special "AnswerLine" telephone service, designed to counter rumors and misinformation about missions.

AnswerLine, which operated from Nov. 14 through Dec. 16, enabled the mission board to receive "a different kind of telephone call in which people expressed concerns and feelings," said Bob Desbien, assistant vice president for public relations.

Through AnswerLine, 89 callers posed questions. Forty-two calls focused on concerns about cuts being made in mission operating budgets overseas for 1989, or questions about the two key channels of foreign missions funding, the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget and the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Several callers, for example, asked whether missionary salaries are being cut. According to Carl Johnson, vice president of finance, missionary salaries have been frozen since 1987. And salaries of both missionaries and home office workers will be frozen in 1989. The only adjustments up or down in current support for missionaries are the ongoing cost-of-living adjustments related to fluctuations of currency and inflation in the countries where missionaries work, Johnson said.

Seven calls focused on the dismissal of missionary Michael Willett last July over doctrinal questions. Willett had been in language study in Costa Rica preparing to teach at a Venezuelan Baptist seminary.

Enrollment up at Baptist colleges

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptist colleges and universities showed an overall increase in fall enrollment for the seventh consecutive year, according to figures released to the Southern Baptist Education Commission.

Enrollment figures for the 1988 fall semester show 104,846 students attended Southern Baptist junior and senior colleges, a 3.6 percent increase over the 1987 total of 101,159.

The enrollment figures include both full-time and part-time students in college credit courses, but do not include students enrolled in non-credit courses.

A compilation of the figures shows that 37 of the 47 senior colleges had an increase in enrollment, ranging from 16.6 percent to 0.1 percent, and all four junior colleges had increased enrollments, ranging from 6.6 percent to 0.7 percent. The fall 1988 total does not include the 368 students attending the former Baptist Bible Institute in Graceville, Fla., which became a four-year senior college in November 1988, and changed its name to Florida Baptist Theological College.

Mobile College in Mobile, Ala., had the largest percentage increase, with 16.6 percent. Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo., showed the largest numerical increase from fall 1987 to fall 1988, with 284 additional students.

Baylor University in Waco, Texas, remains the largest Southern Baptist university, with 11,789 students.

The 1988 fall enrollment figures and the percentage of increase or decrease at Southern Baptist colleges in Mississippi are: Mississippi — Blue Mountain College, 333, (6.7); Mississippi College, 3,540, (1.5); William Carey College, 1,931, (-4.4).

Hunger gifts increase first time since '85

By Louis Moore

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptists in 1988 reversed a downward trend in giving to the denomination's program of world hunger ministries, according to figures released by the Southern Baptist foreign and home mission boards.

Southern Baptist contributions for domestic and foreign hunger last year reached \$9,009,764, representing an increase of about 1 percent over similar giving in 1987. It is also the third-largest amount ever given by Southern Baptists to hunger causes.

The figures do not reflect receipts for "general relief" at the Foreign Mission Board nor money given for hunger that were utilized in local Baptist churches, associations and state conventions.

In 1988, Southern Baptists gave a record \$11,830,146 to hunger causes. Giving dropped in 1986 to \$9,089,279 and then dipped again in 1987 to \$8,931,339. For 1988, the Foreign Mission Board reported receipts of \$7,629,452, an increase over 1987. Receipts for domestic hunger through the Home Mission Board were \$1,380,312 and continued a five-year trend of increases.

John Cheyne, director of the human needs department at the Foreign Mission Board, said the increase in giving from 1987 to 1988 is more significant than the figures show. The 1987 figure reflects a one-time \$1 million gift from one individual. Without that money, the decline from 1986 to 1987 would have been much greater, as would the increase from 1987 to 1988, he said.

Also, the Foreign Mission Board reported receipts for meeting human needs was up in 1988 over 1987. Receipts for "general relief" were \$733,095.

Although general relief appropriations may be spent on hunger-related projects, general relief funds are applied most often to non-hunger-related efforts, such as the reconstruction of homes, churches and schools damaged by natural disasters.

Louis Moore writes for the Christian Life Commission.

Church welcomes Romanian immigrants

By Susan Thornsberry

UNION, Mo. (BP) — As the newcomers to America gathered around the table with their new friends, all bowed their heads to thank God for their many blessings. Then they enjoyed a feast of turkey, dressing, corn, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie — and beautiful Romanian pastries.

Such was the scene recently when about 90 Romanian immigrants accepted an invitation for Thanksgiving dinner with the members of First Baptist Church here.

The Romanians, most of whom are related to each other, fled the communist country to come to the United States. They arrived at various times over the past six years and now live in the Union area.

Thanksgiving was "something very special" for Esther Saleniuc, whose parents escaped Romania and came to Missouri only a month ago. "I thought I'd never see them again," said Saleniuc, who fled Romania in 1982.

"In Romania it's so hard to live . . . to buy food," her father told her as he looked in disbelief at all the tables at the church, filled with food.

In addition to thanking God for the bountiful Thanksgiving feast, the Romanians and members of First Baptist also expressed gratitude to God for leading them into a unique alliance.

Having outgrown Saleniuc's basement, where they had been holding church services, the Romanian group recently accepted First Baptist's invitation to hold worship services in the church's family life center.

"In Romania, it's so hard to live . . ."

The Romanian congregation had been praying for larger facilities. They believe God steered them to the state Driver's License Bureau, where First Baptist's deacon chairman, Jerry Kreft, administers driving tests. Several Romanians had entered the bureau to get their drivers' licenses when they met Kreft. "He asked us how we came here, if we're Christians, if we like it here," recalled Mrs. Saleniuc. "Then he said he was a Christian and I was so glad — a police officer and a Christian."

Kreft was pleased to learn that the Romanians attended church and invited them to visit his church. Eight of them visited one Sunday night and, later in the week, received Kreft and Pastor Ed Gibson as guests in their home.

As friendships developed, the Romanians attended a church fellowship and toured the church building. Showing them the family life center, Gibson mentioned the possibility of the Romanian congregation using the facilities.

Upon a recommendation from the deacons, the church unanimously extended the offer. Receiving the invitation, the Romanian congregation, led by Pastor Larry Bosancu, affirmed the offer was a direct answer to their prayers.

More than 80 Romanians currently attend services on Sunday mornings, Sunday evenings and Thursday evenings.

The church made 50 copies of a Romanian songbook, for which a local corporation donated binders. The

church also helps supply new immigrants with clothes and food baskets.

The Romanian church, in turn, has proved to be a blessing to members of First Baptist. The congregation's involvement with the Romanians has "been like a revival," Gibson observed. "Our people can't wait to get involved; it's brought missions right to us."

Getting to know the Romanian Christians has "made us more appreciative of the freedoms we do have," he said.

"We come for the freedom . . ."

"The Romanians really love the Lord," Kreft added. "To see the smiles on their faces and the sparkles in their eyes makes me proud to be able to help these people."

Before entering the room for worship services, each one kneels and prays. Men and boys sit on one side; women and girls, their heads covered, sit on the other side.

All ages meet together for three hours on Sunday mornings. They have many times of prayer, during which they kneel; they stand while reading the Bible.

"We come for the freedom," said Saleniuc, who explained that believers in Romania face many job restrictions. A Christian there cannot be a police officer, journalist, or government employee and usually cannot be a teacher, either.

So it is for a better life that many Romanians leave the Eastern Bloc country, often by crossing a river into Yugoslavia. Although several received permission to leave Romania, most simply escaped. Often a man will escape and come to the United States, then request that his wife and children be permitted to join him.

Even now, several men in Union prayerfully await the arrival of their wives and children.

Thornsberry is a correspondent for Word & Way, newjournal of the Missouri Baptist Convention.

Baptist Record

005-DTM 2-02
SOUTHERN BAPT HISTORICAL SO 00
901 COMMERCE ST SUITE 401
NASHVILLE TN 37203

Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205

February 2, 1989